

Environmental Newclippings Data in Newspapers

S. No.	Volume	Date	Newspaper	Title	News Detail
1	6	26-Mar-98	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Development vs displacement: a struggle simmers at the border	Part of Gurez Valley, in north Kashmir along the line of control, an ancient tribe is fighting the lone battle against a dam which is considered crucial for the development of the region. In the remote corner of India the valley is the homeland of 25,000 Dard Shin tribes will be submerged once the proposed dam of the Kishen Ganga is built. The land acquisition notices for the Rs.2000 crore 330MW hydro-electric project have already been sent. Dawar, the capital of Gurez and hub of all socio-cultural activity in the area will be drowned and the displacement will not only endanger a language and a particular ethnic community but also their homeland along with the significant archaeological treasure. The government, however, insists that the project is vital for the development of the region and displacement a small price to pay for it and the displaced population will be adequately take care of.
2	6	7-Apr-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Centre to aid J&Ks revival package for tourism sector	The centre government will give full support to the special packages being worked out with leading financial institutions by the Jammu & Kashmir government for revival of the militancy-torn state economy. Leading financial institutions like IFCI, IDBI and many banks will be participating in implementing these packages. The package aims direct finance at subsidised interest rate to entrepreneurs for different categories of tourism activities in the state including that for guest houses, motorboats, travel and excursion and tourist transport. Apart from the financial incentives, the state government is also working on a agenda for strengthening of other related sectors like telecommunication which the state government feel are vital factors upon which hinges the success of reviving of tourism industry in the valley.

3	6	7-Apr-98	THE TRIBUNE	Timber mafia going strong	The police seized large quantities of timber in a dozen other cases during last three months in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. In the wake of tight vigilance being maintained by the police and the forest department, timber smugglers have currently switched over to new modes of transport like maruti vans and is alleged that politicians are at the back of the forest mafia and provide protection to the forest offenders. The latest official count of 1997 reveals a disturbing decline of forest cover of 5,500 km2 compared to the count of 1995 just within two years and this fast shrinking rate is a great concern over countrys forest cover.
4	6	28-Apr-98	THE STATESMAN	J&K Govt plans to restore Dal lake to former glory	The Jammu & Kashmir Government has chalked out a comprehensive programme for restoration of the famous Dal lake situated at an altitude of 1,580m above sea level in the eastern part of Srinagar, to its original shape and avert its possible extinction. The lake has shrunk from 48 km2 in 1947 to nearly 15 km2 due to unchecked encroachments and pollution. Under the restoration programme a modern machine manufactured in collaboration with the Dutch costing about Rs. 3.5 crore would be put in use for de-silting under supervision of scientists, limmologists and engineers.
5	6	9-May-98	THE BUSINESS STANDARD	J&K govt aims to revive sericulture	The Jammu and Kashmir government has embarked upon a multipronged strategy to revive sericulture using traditional method of cultivation in a bid to double cocoon production in the state this year. According to the official sources, the sericulture development department is distributing silk worm seeds to farmers and expects three lakh kg cocoon production and 335 incubation centres have been set up in the valley.

6	6	15-Apr-98	THE TRIBUNE	Govt in fix over resuming mining	The Himachal Government is ready to lift the ban on mining, which is a livelihood for thousands of people in the surrounding area of Khaniyara in Kangra district. The main hurdle in permitting mining in the area is the Supreme Court order that no non-forest activity would be carried out on forest land without approval of the Central government. In view of this, permission has to be sought from the Centre, as some of the ecologically fragile area of Khaniyara has been indicated as forest land in the revenue records, though the forest department agreed that the area is unculturable waste and does not strictly come under this category. The permits for short-term mining would be issued to all those who had applied, after getting the permission only, though some mining lessees admit illegal mining is going on at a number of places and there is no point to maintaining ban on it.
7	6	21-Apr-98	THE HINDU	A project to predict earthquakes	Peninsular shield of India could no longer be considered seismically inactive and the United Nations expert committee, after the 1993 Latur quake, had strongly recommended regular monitoring of the region, and suggested dense Geographical Positioning System (GPS) & vertical control methods to monitor seismotectonic activities. Based on this Dehradun based Survey of India (Department of Science & Technology) will launch a World Bank funded plan to geodetically monitor the peninsular shield using GPS to predict earthquakes apart from monitoring Crystal movements in the subcontinent on a regular basis. Today GPS is the most widely used technique to generate inputs for the earthquake prediction process and also finds extensive application in fields as varied as navigation, surveying, mapping, remote sensing and developmental activities.
8	6	24-Apr-98	THE STATESMAN	Bill to prevent foreign states from patenting Darjeeling tea	After Basmati and turmeric issues patenting Darjeeling tea is a major issue in international community. The Indian tea industry is demanding a patent for the premium tea on the grounds that Sri Lankan producers and exporters are selling tea grown in the island nation as Darjeeling tea. In view of this the government is preparing a draft bill to treat Darjeeling tea as a geographic indicator to prevent other countries from patenting it or claiming to sell the premium tea variety. According to the official, the industry and trade policy divisions of the Centre are preparing the Bill for enactment which would make India the only country of origin of Darjeeling tea besides being the geographic indicator.

9	6	30-Apr-98	DOWN TO EARTH	Pest attack	Deodar defoliator (<i>Ectropis deodarae</i>), a forest pest has affected about one lakh cedar trees in Naganalli and Mihani ranges of Theog forest division of Shimla district, Himachal Pradesh. The pest feeds no other tree species except on deodar and it is a valuable tree growing between 1800 to 2600 m above seal level in the north-west Himalaya comprising an estimated area of 2,03,263 ha in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and hills of Uttar Pradesh. The scientists fears that the attack may become epidemic cause large scale destruction, if appropriate action is not taken immediately.
10	6	11-May-98	THE BUSINESS AND POLITICAL OBSERVER	Limestone mining continues unabated in Doon valley	In spite of Supreme Court order banning all mining activities, contractors are continuing limestone mining in the Doon valley in Uttar Pradesh even though their lease hold period had expired as long back as 1984. The mining areas are located in the thick forests in the Tehri Garhwal district within the Doon valley, which were saved from destruction by the apex court through several orders, from indiscriminate limestone mining in 1983 on a public interest petition by an NGO. After the apex court order of December 1996 in the tree felling case, the status of the 9.85 hectares of civil land was that of forest land as the entire mining area was having natural growth of forest tree and undergrowth, the District Magistrate order to allow mining and export mining material from this land was defiance and no way justifiable.
11	6	18-May-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Scientists find scarcity of honeybees cause for fruit loss in Himachal	Scientists at the Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry have found that the lack of an adequate number of bee colonies in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh is one reason for the poor apple crop. The horticulture experts feel that many orchards do not bear enough fruit because of population of bees is too small, which plays a significant contribution in apple pollination. There are all about 10,000 to 12,000 bee colonies including private bee-keepers which is just 8% of the total requirement of the state. According to their recommendations, apple yields can be considerably increased by pollination by honeybees and at least two bee colonies are required for each hectare of orchard, which can be met by government intervention and additional involvement by the private sector.

12	6	19-May-98	THE HINDU	Jhum cultivation causes soil degradation in Nagaland	According to official sources about 44 lakh tones of fertile top soil is lost every year from areas where Jhum (shifting) cultivation is practiced in Nagaland. It has been estimated that 70% of the total top soil degradation and water resources deterioration was due to it. According to the Director of Soil Conservation, contour bunding across the hill slopes of jhum fields is the most suitable technique and with jhum cycle having been reduced to 4-5 years from the earlier 8-10 years earth contour bunds were proposed to be constructed during the Ninth Plan in the State. The tangible progress has been made in weaning away farmers from jhum cultivation by adopting watershed techniques under the State plan and Centrally-sponsored schemes, claimed by the director and one project each would be taken up in all the 52 rural development blocks of the state during the Ninth Plan.
13	6	28-May-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Need to properly manage water resources	Arunachal Pradesh could be one of the richest state of the country if its water resources were properly managed, said the Chief Minister, Gegong Apang while inaugurating a workshop on water resource management at Itanagar. He also said that the state could supply 50% of the county's hydel power requirements with proper management of its vast water resources. Expressing concern over the faulty national planning, Sri Apang said the planners failed to realize the need for proper management of water resources in the north-eastern region and Arunachal Pradesh in particular.

14	6	27-Apr-98	THE HINDU	Devastating quake forecast in Assam before 2010	The probability of an earthquake in Assam of a magnitude greater than 8 on the Richter Scale at any time before the year 2010, according to a renowned environmental scientist, Prof. S.K. Sarmah of Gauhati University. Prof. Sarmah said these, together with computed return periods for high magnitude earthquake of the region and historical seismicity tended to indicate the probability of occurrence of a high magnitude earthquake in the western part of the north-east at any time in the next few years and any delay in the occurrence of the quake will only increase its magnitude. In order to reduce loss of lives and properties due to this earthquake, it is necessary to adopt some precautionary measure without delay and people should be made aware of the dangers soon.
15	6	30-Apr-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	'Crack in Tehri dam causes alarm	Though the official of Tehri Hydro Development Corporation denied the report of either sinking or cracking any part of the site, but the reports have triggered a debate on whether the phenomenon is only of a local nature or related to seismic activity in the Garhwal region. The region has experiences frequent tremors since time immemorial and frequent tectonic activity along the outer Himalayan belt, made of fragile rocks along with frequent rainfall have often triggered fluvial action and slope failures, according to experts. However, former Director-General of Geological Survey of India denies any seismic activity causing the crack, might have appeared due to some constructional lacunae. Those opposing the construction, argue that the quake hit Uttarkashi district in October 1991 also effected the adjoining Tehri district, where the mega dam is being constructed, is a seismically very active area.
16	6	6-May-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Development plans fail to help Tripura tribal	Tribals of Tripura are flooded with too many development projects but many of these projects fall through as they are unsuitable for them. Certain schemes introduced in the area were not acceptable to the tribals, according to the Director of Tribal Research Directorate (TRD). Some times projects are pushed through without training the tribals in their use, for instance solar energy in some remote tribal villages. He admits that the government departments do not consult the TRD on the suitability of a scheme before launching it, often lack of education also makes tribals less receptive to development programmes.

17	6	14-May-98	THE PIONEER	Tourism, ecology must go hand in hand	The concept of eco-tourism in the Himalayan regions is required urgently as it will go a long way in preserving the natural beauty of these mountains which attract thousand of tourists from the world over and help support these mountain economies. All developmental activity related to making available better tourist amenities must also be eco-friendly, according to Mr Umesh Dwivedi, editor of Himalayan Paryavaran - an environment magazine. Eco-tourism is ecologically and socially responsible nature based tourism that fosters environmental appreciation and understanding.
18	6	25-May-98	THE STATESMAN	Tehri - the cracks are showing	The Tehri Hydro Dam Corporation (THDC) officials have refuted the existence of any cracks or damage to the structure near the control gate shaft through which the stored water of the reservoir would flow towards the turbines. The officials also denied any sinking of the mountain in face portion. They claim that they are only removing the loose overburden mass to reach a firm foundation before starting the actual construction of the main structure. The author presents a detailed discussion on environmental and ecological factors related to the dam with a long term view. The Tehri dam project is a prime example of large technological intervention in nature and unthinking adherence to a plan based on old ideas. The region has very shaky foundation and the dam is located in a highly seismic zone. The Ganga tear fault, also known as the inner ridge of Delhi-Haridwar is pushing the Garhwal region to north-east at a rate of 2 to 3 cm every year causing prone to earthquakes. The enormous amount of water (storage capacity 2615 million m3) in 42.5 km2 reservoir will enhance the intensity of any earthquake that might take place and cause collapse of the dam. The new Tehri township where those ousted from the dam site are going shifted is also of doubtful stability as cracks had developed and there was sinking of roads even before the quake. On the dam site the gate number 3 lies in a relatively unstable shear zone of the hills and due to the unstable slope formed by the slumped mass the top surface of the shaft no. 3 has sunk, causing cracks. Further damage to the structure is not ruled out with the onset of rains.

19	6	8-Apr-98	THE STATESMAN	Bleak future for watershed development scheme	The report reveals a bleak future for watershed development projects continuing in the sub-Himalayan Uttar Pradesh. The Himalayan Watershed Management Project, initiated by the World Bank in 1982, in the valley of two tributaries, Nayaar and Panaar was abandoned in less than a decade amidst criticism about lapses in the implementation and monitoring. The European Economic Community (EEC), with highly acclaimed approach of participatory rural appraisal, besides involving village communities in the decision making and implementation of the project, remained at the mercy of its donors, only to undergo erratic expansions and contractions until its final stages. The status of Watershed Management Directorate established in a forest clearing at Dehradun is still not clear. Efforts to award it a permanent status have not borne fruit, amidst pulls and pressures between the donor agency and successive representatives of the government. However, in a meeting between EEC officials and Uttaranchal Vikas Vibhag, the EEC asked to bear the burden of employees wages. But the devaluation of the rupees and wage hikes making things all the more difficult for a cash-strapped treasury.
20	6	9-Apr-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Panel to review management of Loktak lake	An understanding was reached between India and Canada under the India-Canada Environment Facility (ICEF) on February to launch a major project for the sustainable development and water resource management of the Loktak lake based on a project proposal conceived by the Loktak Development Authority (LDA) and Wetlands International South Asia (WISA) to save it from deterioration as a result of the Loktak Hydroelectric power project. The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) has reconstituted a high level technical advisory committee on lakes to oversee matters of development and management of these natural water bodies. The committee comprising members from MoEF, LDA, Planning Commission, Manipur University and World Wildlife Fund of India and has seriously considered an overall review of the present management of Loktak lake, the largest fresh water lake in the north-eastern region by different agencies.

21	6	13-Apr-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Red mites pose threat to apple crop in Himachal	Red spider mites have posed a serious threat to the apple crop in Himachal Pradesh, which is the backbone of the state economy in terms of revenue. According to experts of Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry the premature defoliation observed in an endemic form in some apple growing areas of Chamba resulted in reduced photosynthetic activity effecting apple production. Experts point out that an invasion by European red mite took place first in Mandi and Kullu district then it spread to Chamba and Shimla and over 62% of total apple orchards has been reported to be infected with the mite.
22	6	27-Apr-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Darjeeling tea planters resort to organic farming	Organic farming in tea is fast gaining ground in the hills and as many as 11 gardens in Darjeeling have gone fully bio-organic. Apart from clinching better export deals in the European market, such kind of farming has helped in the retention of top soil and kept it alive with micro-organisms. With exports of organic tea on the rise, most growers are contemplating a conversion of the tea growing area for organic cultivation. Most organic planters admitted that the trend in productivity has shown an increase in tea estates that gone for conversion and that is why many gardens are switching over to bio-organic farming.
23	6	6-Mar-98	THE BUSINESS LINE	Watershed management in Himalaya urge	The delegates of the seminar organised by Himalayan Institute of Action Research and Development stressed on an integrated scientific framework must be evolved for planning management of the fragile ecological resources of the Himalayan region, with a focus on watershed management. Environment and resource mapping, hydrological parameters of watersheds, application of remote sensing techniques and geographical information system measurement of biotic interference and ecotop therapy/ecotop surgery were discussed in the seminar. The watershed management approach aims at creating a self-supporting system essential for sustainability of the hill regions economy.

24	6	8-Mar-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Threat to Manipur wetlands	<p>The wetlands of Manipur valley are playing an important role in the environmental management of the state. The ecology of the lakes of Manipur have badly deteriorated, due to accelerating rate of siltation, eutrophication and pollution. Some of the lakes like Tokyelpat, Lamphelpat and Utrapat have dried up. The volume of water in the Loktak lake has reduced to half from 600 million cubic metres in 1970 due to heavy siltation rate raising the bottom of the lake during last two decades. Uncontrolled cutting of wood for timber fuel and other forest products has led to heavy destruction of forest in the catchment areas of the wetlands. Deforestation caused accelerated soil erosion and siltation of the lakes and river, filling up the wetlands gradually. Besides the nutrients brought from the catchment with the run-off, huge amount of domestic sewage and municipal sewage along with the toxic organochlorine pesticides like DDT cause pollution. With the drying of these wetlands the whole environment of the state are in serious threat.</p>
25	6	24-Mar-98	THE TRIBUNE	Scheme to augment power	<p>Kinnaur, the beautiful valley of apple orchards is now diversifying the field of power in a big way. The Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board (HPSEB) and other power agencies are busy exploiting the present power potential in the hill district. The Sanjay Vidyut Pariyojna Bhaba is supplying power to Himachal and other adjoining states. A private company has started its first venture on Baspa Stage-II 300MW hydro-power project. Besides these, the dam site of the Nathpa Jhakri project having a capacity of 1500MW is being constructed as a joint venture of the Himachal Government and Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation is also falls in Kinnaur district. It is estimated that a huge power potential of 3000MW remains to be exploited in the district.</p>

26	6	2-Apr-98	THE TRIBUNE	4.5 cr for wasteland development	Under the integrated wasteland development project, Rs. 4.5 crore had been sanctioned by the central government for Sirmaur in Himachal Pradesh. 15 watersheds would be selected and developed and when completed it would develop 12,500 hectares of wasteland by soil erosion measures, large scale plantation, development of grass lands. The project also envisages employment opportunities for unemployment youths.
27	6	6-Apr-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Call to preserve natural resources	The conveyor of Gene-Campaign held at Shillong urged the people to preserve the patent rights of their natural resources of the region. The north-eastern region is one of the twelve regions of the world having vast biodiversity potential. The campaigns sustained position continues to be against patents and privatisation in this field in this field. The biotechnology, is one of the modern technology where we can be highly competitive and should not allow ourselves to be tied up by patent laws. For the first time since independence, India is in a position to be not just the consumer of a new technology but one of its important produces, admits conveyor.

28	6	5-Jun-98	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Cry of the Himalayas	Save humankind by saving trees, nowhere is this message more relevant than in the holy Himalaya, the author recall the famous Chipko movement of Seventies in Uttarakhand. The movement has attempted to stimulate awareness in people about the nature of the exploitation to which their forests and therefore, their lives are exposed. He claims that the sheer amount we waste each year in tackling floods and droughts should be proof enough of this. The exploitation of our forest wealth is tantamount to the annihilation of our cultures. The industrial revolution was the start of this terrible trend. The industries have little connection with forests and soils and thus millions who once protected and nourished these gifts of nature are themselves caught in a web of destruction. Quite apart from this, they are forced to live subhuman existence on streets and slums where they quickly lose even the dignity that was their birthright. Only 31% of forest area remaining in the Uttarakhand according to satellite imagery. The author appeal for join us in convincing our government that any further commercial exploitation of the Himalaya through the clear-felling of its forests or the building of destructive projects such as the Tehri Dam can only result in weakening the foundation of our security for tomorrow.
29	6	23-Jun-98	THE BUSINESS LINE	Japanese-aided sericulture project launched in Imphal	The Japanese Ambassador to India formally inaugurated the first phase of the Japanese Government funded multi-crore-repees Manipur sericulture project in Imphal. He admits the project focus on the involvement of women and had advantages for a State like Manipur where there were no big industries. According to the Manipur State Sericulture Directorate, each unit will produce silk yarn worth Rs. 1.5 lakhs and the entire project will provide employment for 34,800 people.

30	6	31-Oct-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Watershed shifting cultivation gaining impetus in Tawang	Watershed shifting cultivation is gaining impetus among the people of the snow clad Tawang district of the backward Himalayan state of Arunachal Pradesh over the last few years. The National Watershed Development Project in shifting cultivation area, Mukto, under Tawang district which was approved by the state government has been functioning since 1996. The beneficiaries were imparted training on the work with the help of local expert and have also been provided with project incentives for purchase of cloth nets, locally available raw materials from the project fund and successfully produced local paper to a total quantity of 30,000 sheets this year.
31	6	6-Jun-98	THE TELEGRAPH	BHEL plan to ensure clean water for hills	To ensure clean potable water in the upper reaches of the Ganga and its tributaries, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has undertaken a scientific monitoring and analysis programme. As per the contract awarded under the Ganga Action Plan, BHELs Pollution Control Research Institute at Hardwar will conduct monthly studies, analyse and scientifically assess the water quality of river streams from Badrinath to Anoopshihar, on continuous basis. The results of this programme will determine the need of setting up sewage treatment plants for cities like Srinagar, Joshimath and Uttarkashi.
32	6	6-Jun-98	THE TELEGRAPH	Foresters fiddle as Kumaon burns	Forest fire in Bageswar and Pithoragarh districts in Uttarakhand have caught forest officers napping. Gearing up for World Environment Day celebrations, to officers ignored the fire for over 12 hours in Bageswar, Kausani and Pithoragarh of Kumaon hills. However, the Nainital forest division has reported loss of trees in 213 hectares and the forest department has recorded 57 cases of forest fires in the past week. The funds of UNDP, who had collaborated with the state in a fire control project, have been irregular and the state government too had not provided the required manpower. Further, the crackdown on the forest mafia was largely on paper.

33	6	13-Jul-98	THE STATESMAN	Himachal lake facing environmental damage	Renuka lake, one of Himachal Pradeshs most picturesque and largest lakes in the Sirmaur district is suffering from serious natural hazards, such as heavy silting, growth of dense weeds and pollution by the residents and visitors and neglect by the authorities. Although slow paced desilting is currently going on in the adjoining Parshuram lake, but it was found that there is in fact a need for voluntary organisations who can involve pilgrims, locals and the government to carry out the longterm operations.
34	6	18-Jul-98	THE TRIBUNE	Haphazard constructions make HP quake-prone	Haphazard constructions make The forest cover in Himachal Pradesh is gradually decreasing with concrete building and orchards coming up in place of green trees. Mult-storey concrete buildings are coming up throughout the state despite the fact that the state has been placed in seismic zones IV and V, which are the two highest earthquake-prone zones in the country. Unfortunately, the successive governments in the state have not taken any measures to enforce the building laws or prepare a plan to allow only such structures which fit in the hill environment.
35	6	12-Sep-98	THE TRIBUNE	Denuded, eroded and killed	Man-induced soil erosion today poses the single largest threat to the stability of the Himalayan ecology. Due to incessant depletion of forests, about 600 million tonnes of top, fertile soil, is washed annually into streams and rivers from the hills of Himachal Pradesh. Forestry experts are of the view that the growing biotic pressures on the forests, the prime cause of soil erosion. Over grazing, excessive extraction of fuelwood and herbs, unscientific lopping of trees for fodder, and forest fires are some of the factors contributing of the shrinking forest cover of the state. The author presents a detailed study on decreasing forest cover and various effective measures to check soil erosion by afforestation.

36	6	25-Jun-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	316 sq km forests lost NE in 2 years	The North-Eastern states have lost over 300 sq. km forest cover since 1995 even as a Supreme Court order banning felling of trees is in vogue in the region. A report compiled by Forest Survey of India revealed that Assam recorded maximum forest loss followed by Manipur while Mizoram recorded an increase in forest coverage during 1995-97. The states Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland still have more than two-third of their total area under forest cover. The Ministry of Environment & Forests declared Dibru-Saikhowa sanctuary (Assam) as a new biosphere reserve, while Nokrek sanctuary (Meghalaya) and Manas Tiger Reserve (Assam) had already been identified as such reserves considering their rich biodiversity and unique ecosystems. The Ministry also sanctioned various projects to Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India, Regional Research Laboratory and Manipur University during these years.
37	6	4-Jul-98	THE ASIAN AGE	Tripura to have solar electricity	The Tripura Government has initiated steps to implement the Centre-sponsored programme to bringing solar-power electricity to 10 police stations in remote Indo-Bangla international border areas. The scheme was being implemented under the border area development programme, the first in the north eastern region, wireless sets of these ten police stations would also be operated through solar electricity.
38	6	7-Jul-98	THE ASIAN AGE	Action plan to combat poaching in the Northeast	Alarmed by the destruction of forests and depletion of rare wild animals in the Northeast, environmentalists here are working on an action plan to combat widespread smuggling and poaching. Experts from the Kaziranga, Manas and Pabitora reserves have stepped up security arrangements in the area to combat illegal poaching.

39	6	9-Jul-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Horticulture can transform rural economy in North East	A horticulture revolution in the north eastern region is possible through an integrated development programme to bring about a transformation on the rural economy in the North East, according to Dr H.P. Singh, Horticulture Commissioner of India. The meeting held at Shillong, on the proposed Technology Mission for the Integrated Development of Horticulture, took stock of the horticulture potential in the region. However, he lamented that the various schemes and programmes for horticultural development launched by the Centre have not reached the farmers.
40	6	12-Jul-98	THE STATESMAN	Uncontrolled limestone mining causing environmental hazards	Despite mounting pressure by environmentalists to close down limestone mining causing environmental hazards in the Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh, the same is continuing. There are around 50 major mines under the Sirmaur district mining officer. Illegal mining is estimated at over a third of the entire mining work being carried out in the belt. The limestone mining has been banned in the bordering Doon valley of Uttar Pradesh due to serious environmental hazards, but the Himachal Pradesh Government has given a free hand to carry out mining activity on the pretext that is lucrative for the locals as well as the state government.
41	6	25-Aug-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	UP plan to prevent hill disasters	The state government has decided to commission two projects to help prevent natural calamities in the Uttar Pradesh hills in the wake of the landslides which claimed several lives in Malpa and led to widespread devastation. An ambitious 2,100 crore project to be executed with the help of the World Bank is eco-restoration and development in hill areas will be implemented in phases. The other project, Integrated Watershed Development Plan, will include water management and eco-friendly programmes.

42	6	12-Aug-98	THE TRIBUNE	Rohtang Pass faces pollution threat	Rohtang pass (13,050ft altitude), the famous tourist destination, 51 km from Manali in Himachal Pradesh is facing a serious pollution threat. During May-June and September-October, thousands of tourists visit the Pass daily, but the lack of tourist amenities and ever-accumulating layers of non-degradable materials polluting the entire terrain from Manali to the Pass. If the menace of pollution caused by non-degradable material is not controlled soon, tourism, will face severe problem. But, unfortunately the government is yet to take any remedial steps.
43	6	17-Aug-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Govt set to approve Rs 370 cr hydel project for N-E	The Vajpayee government is all set to push through a Rs 370 crore hydro electric project in the Aizwal district of Mizoram under its new initiatives plan for the north-eastern region. Design of the various components of the Tuirial Hydro-electric project was made in consultation with Central Water Commission and Central Electricity Authority. After the agreement with Mizoram government the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) executing the project, aims at generating 240 million units of hydro power.

44	6	19-Aug-98	THE TRIBUNE	Illegal mining, quarrying on the rise	Large-scale illegal and unscientific mining and quarrying combined with public utility like construction of roads and buildings have further contributed to the fragility for ecology creating an environmental imbalances in Himachal Pradesh. The forest destruction by illegal and legal mining have resulted in floods and land erosion of the state. A survey reveals is that most of the person who are engaged in this business enjoy protection of ministers and MLAs and on their recommendations the officials of the state mining department have been issuing casual permits by charging nominal royalty from these persons. The mining and quarrying in the state has put a question mark on the lives of Bhakra and Pong dams built at a high cost. The capacity to hold water by these dams has been reducing year after year because of heavy siltation caused by destruction of forests and mining in the catchment areas of these dams. Besides these natural lakes in Dharamsala and Chamba have been diminished because of soil erosion and existence of Rewalsar lake is under threat.
45	6	20-Aug-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	New forest policy in Nagaland	The Nagaland government has formulated a policy for protection of forest, environment and ecology with adoption of the national forest policy 1988. The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 had also been adopted in the State for management of wildlife in national parks and sanctuaries and also for conservation of biosphere invoking all sections of the people.

46	6	20-Sep-98	THE HINDU	Towards eco-friendly tourism in Himalayas	Eco-tourism is slowly but surely catching up in the Himalayas with benefits accruing from it slow in coming and few takers among the entrepreneurs. According to Wildrift Adventures, an environment friendly adventure tourism in the Himalayan region, the eco-tourism should attempt to link tourism promotion to regional development and environmental concerns to optimise the benefits from the tourism industry for the Himalayas on a sustaining basis. However, there are only a few NGOs who are trying to do their part for the cause of the environment, notable are Society for Nature, Environment and Humanity (SNEH), Central Himalayan Rural Action People (CHIRAG) and an womens organisation Arohi operating in the Uttarakhand region. Their activities are varied like involvement in various social forestry schemes, nurseries, developing rain water harvesting system, preservation of lakes, building stone cottages using local architecture and materials, afforestation and tree planting with the help of local and outside school children according to the needs of the area.
47	6	28-Sep-98	THE TRIBUNE	Mystery fires of Himachal	Investigations into the mysterious drying up of over two thousand full grown trees in Kheer Ganga forest under Parbati division three years ago have led to the uncovering of a major scandal and revealed the modus operandi of how officials have been plundering the states precious forest reserves in the grab of salvage marking. There have been numerous instances in which green trees had been felled. However, the department despite the total ban on felling of oak, took no action against the errant officers.

48	6	5-Oct-98	THE HINDU	Major drive to restore glory of Dal lake	The Dal lake spanning over 75 km ² in the 13th century, covers only 24 km ² now according to Urban Development Department. Alarmed by scientific findings that the world famous Dal, the post-glacial lake may cease to exist in 100 years from now, the government and other agencies have launched a major drive to distill and dewed the lake, and free from encroachments. A project of Rs. 300 crore was formulated by the National Lake Conservation Programme of the Union Environment and Forest ministry after a pre-feasibility report for the conservation of Dal and Nageen lakes was submitted. The lake conservation programme includes afforestation and soil conservation in lower Dachigam area and Dara Danihama catchment areas and tapping of debris and sediments from the catchment area by constructing settling basin at Teilbal.
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49	6	4-Oct-98	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Inside the garden	<p>Several hundred of Bhotiya tribals of Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve living in the village of Lata, Tolma, Peng and Rini which lie on the periphery of the park, went on a hunger strike and forcibly entered the parks core zone to claim their traditional rights of gathering forest produce and grazing their cattle. With the closure of the park in 1982 and the banning of human activity within it, most of the tribals who had earned their livelihood by rearing goats and sheep and by collecting medicinal herbs from the forests, found themselves difficult to survive. The study conducted between 1994 to 1997, revealed the population declined 15% over the decade. The villagers also found that the medicinal herb base, which they had been harvesting in a sustainable manner over centuries, had also been recklessly plundered. The Valley of Flower, declared a protected area, is an example of the tragedy since grazing has been banned there. The study suggested that promotion of ecotourism in the buffer zones of the reserve and the setting up of employment generating schemes in the area to help ease the problems of the people. It also recommended that the forest department be better equipped to deal with the task of protecting the local ecology and maintaining the biodiversity in the biosphere. Hence policing such extensive areas is impossible without the active support of the very people who have a personal stake in the survival of these fragile forests.</p>
50	6	18-Oct-98	THE SENTINEL	Afforestation plan by forest dept	<p>The forest department of Nagaland has decided to take up afforestation programme for regeneration of degraded forests with the objective of converting such areas to productive forests. The consequence of uncontrolled tree felling and shifting cultivation leading to serious ecological problem, whereas the active participation of the land owners was needed for successful implementation of the afforestation programme thereby establishing a resource based economy.</p>

51	6	19-Oct-98	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Himachal Pradesh apples hit by pests	According to the scientist of Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Solan, about 69% of apple crop in Kullu, Shimla, and Mandi had been adversely affected because of red mites. Apple production generate a revenue of about Rs. 300 crore, which is the backbone of the economy of Himachal Pradesh and the peculiar topography and agro-climatic conditions prevailing in the state are ideally suited for the production of different type of apple crops. According to experts, use of highly concentrated Nephthaline and presence of red mites have dashed hopes of a bumper apple crop in this season.
52	6	13-Sep-98	THE PIONEER	Digging up an eco disaster in Kullu	The Kullu valley in Himachal Pradesh faces serious ecological degradation because of large-scale unscientific and illegal mining and quarrying. Despite the deployment of field guards to check this by the Department of Industries, illegal quarrying is on the rise. Geo-scientists say that a ban on mining in river beds should be strictly implemented in order to save the valley from flash floods.
53	6	25-Jun-98	THE TRIBUNE	Villagers oppose airport project	The proposal for an airport in the tourist area of Banikhet in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh has not materialised due to procedural wrangles. Over 1000 residents of Pukhri and Kanda villages are opposed to the idea, as atleast 150 families will be dislocated and thousands of pine trees axed. The residents point out that during the past 10 years a number of surveys have been conducted, but nobody has bothered to find any alternate site for their habitation and suggest adequate compensation for them. However, the Director of Civil Aviation said that the people would be given good compensation and efforts would be made to get them jobs. The government claims that the airport will go a long way in promoting tourism in Chamba.

54	6	21-Sep-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Quake likely in Himalayas: Expert	A major earthquake, with a magnitude of above 8 on Richter scale, is likely to hit the Himalayan region, anytime in the next 10 years, as the seismologically vulnerable mountain ranges are undergoing dynamic geomorphologic changes, according to eminent geologist Dr J.G. Negi of National Geophysical Research Institute. The Himalaya, the youngest mountain ranges in the world stretching over 2,000 kms, is a very dynamic zone caught up in a plate tectonic activity involving Eurasia and Indian plate. Because of this activity, the folds in Himalayas are undergoing continuous adjustments, Dr Negi said. He stressed to be cautious and chalk out advance measures to identify precursors and put in place the disaster management system.
55	6	7-Oct-98	THE PIONEER	Timber smuggling depletes J&K forests	An estimated 3 lakh conifer, deodar and kail trees have been smuggled from the forests in Jammu and Kashmir during the years of high-pitched militancy, according to the Forest Minister of the state. The area of degraded forests in the State has swelled to 5 lakh hectares. The wildlife, social forestry, fisheries, environment and pollution departments have become non-functional with infrastructure suffering colossal damages, the Minister said. The Government had launched a drive against smugglers and encroaches and had reactivated forest agencies, paving the way for better forest management. To meet the challenge posed by smugglers and encroachers, the Government has decide to raise a forest protection force at a cost of Rs 105 crore. However, the critics have constantly alleged that funds which come from the Union Government and foreign agencies like the World Bank are not properly utilised for promotion, protection and conservation of forests and other related sectors. They claim that the continuing misuse of funds would have disastrous results, leading to soil erosion and heavy flooding in the valley.

56	6	16-Oct-98	THE STATESMAN	Mafia encroaches on Himachal forest land	Large-scale encroachment of forest land is going on unchecked in the apple belt of Himachal Pradesh. The highest number of such incidents is being reported from Rohru, Jubbal, Kotkhai and Chopal. While the encroachment of land adjoining apple orchards has been going on for decades, but of late there is a growing trend of adopting far more aggressive and menacing methods such as penetrating the virgin pine forests and occupying land there, before the neighbour does the same. What has angered environmentalists most is that despite adequate powers with the forest and revenue department to eject these illegal encroachers, virtually nothing has been done by successive governments to deal with them effectively.
57	6	19-Oct-98	THE HINDU	Civilisation takes its toll of Nainital	Before the first British description of Naini Tal appeared in the Calcutta Englishman in 1842, the lake in the vicinity of Almora was frequented by the local people on certain occasions. There was certainly no habitation and mountain tourism was virtually unknown then. Unplanned growth of the lake city, legal and illegal constructions without any regard for the hill geography, increase in population and traffic congestion have all whittled the charm of the Kumaun hills, which inspired hundreds of sages to retire to the mountains to worship and meditate. Today lakhs of tourists visit Naini Tal and its surrounding Bhim Tal and Naukachia Tal every year, adversely effecting the environment of the town and the water quality of the lake. The three lake are a study in contrast, Naini Tal is dying and cries out for resuscitation. Bhim Tal has already started unfolding its bounties before tourists, while the Naukachia Tal is still innocent.
58	6	19-Oct-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Rafting on Alaknanda upsets greens	With ever increasing water sport activity along the Alaknanda river upstream of Rishikesh has upset environmentalists. Over the last few years, there has been a sudden spurt in the rafting activity in the area. Though the official of Garhwal Mandal Vikash Nigam said that they are very careful about the environment dimensions of the sport which involve large groups, further the increase emphasis on eco-tourism came the latent danger to the fragile eco-system on the region.

59	6	27-Oct-98	THE BUSINESS AND POLITICAL OBSERVER	Tehri Dam at the root of landslides	The author presents a detailed study after the August 1998 landslides in the region, which ended the Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra at Malpa village. The Himalayas, being the tallest as well as the most fragile mountain system in the world, are organically very active. Thousands of landslides of medium to large dimensions occur seasonally. According to geologists the seismic movements are perennial in the young Himalayas. On an average, nearly 200 earthquakes of varying degrees occur yearly in the Uttarakhand region itself. The Bahuguna activists blame the building and construction of Tehri for disturbance of the existing eco-system and for the catastrophic landslides that devastated the Uttarakhand area. The August 98 landslides made the Chipko followers vocal on the related issues. The author views that the effect of human disaster would be worse than that of a nuclear bomb and the construction of Tehri Dam could hasten such a possibility.
60	6	27-Oct-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Forest protection force will clear encroachments in J&K	The Forest Protection Force (FPF) being set up in Jammu and Kashmir will justify its existence more by removing encroachments on forest land than by counter-smuggling operation. The loss due to encroachments was much bigger than that caused by illegal felling of trees, according to the chief conservator of forests, Kashmir division. The setting up of FPF involved an expenditure of Rs 105 crore, equipped with modern communications network to facilitate rapid action, is expected to curb forest smugglers. However, the environmentalists disagree with it, saying the money being spent on the FPF could be better utilised by undertaking rehabilitation work in the degraded forests.

61	6	31-Oct-98	THE HINDU	Nomadic tribe opposes eviction move	A large number of Van Gujjars expressed deep anguish over the move to evict them from the forests. These nomadic tribes are also sore at the authorities trying to prevent them from lopping leaves for feeding their livestock. The Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra has mooted Community Forest Management Plan, advocating that forests could be better managed by indigenous people living in or depending on the forests. Several environmentalists admit the Van Gujjars, being strict vegetarians and having vast knowledge of silviculture and wildlife are a fit case to manage the proposed Rajaji National Park.
62	6	10-Nov-98	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Himachal bans use of recycled polybags	In a major step forward to deal with polythene menace, the Himachal Pradesh government has proposed a ban on the use of recycled, coloured polythene bags for carrying food items. The notification is being issued under the States Non-Biodegradable Garbage (control) Act, 1995, however there is no ban on the manufacturing units or even sale of recycled polythene bags.
63	6	12-Nov-98	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Beas plan delay: SC rebukes HP govt	The Supreme Court today pulled up the Himachal Pradesh government for not submitting a composite action plan to restore the ecology and environment of river Beas as directed by the court to submit a composite action plan to restore its ecology in the Kullu-Manali region. Counsel for the state government said the irrigation and other department had already started afforestation activity in the catchment areas of the river and other preliminary plans were being worked out.
64	6	Dec-98	RASHTRIYA SAHARA	Ladakh threatened	The pristine beauty of the mountainous Ladakh is in danger of being spoilt forever by increasing pollution and ecological and ecological damage due to increased tourist traffic. Hotels and guest houses are coming up in agricultural areas. Inadequate electricity has forced hotel and guest house owners to use diesel-run generators, disposed of plastic bags causing the mystical place is threatened to end up as yet another unplanned touristy ghetto.

65	6	1-Dec-98	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Umiam Lake choked by Shillong garbage	The breathtaking Umiam Lake, 15 km away from capital Shillong, a major tourist attraction in the North-East, is slowly turning poisonous with toxic wastes polluting the lakes tranquil water. Solid wastes, sewage water and other pollutants from the Shillong city are draining into the lake threatening its very existence. The Umkhrah and Umshyrpi, the two major streams, have been virtually turned into mere sewage carriers. The expert called for immediately setting of a sewage treatment plant and total ban on dumping of garbage and other solid waste into the waterbodies as urgent remedial steps.
66	6	24-Nov-98	THE TRIBUNE	Sandal wood plants in Himachal	Contrary to the popular belief that sandal was the exclusive preserve of the southern states, scientists of Silviculture and Agroforestry department of Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni have successfully developed nursery and plantation technologies for large-scale establishment of sandal (Chandan) in the lower areas of the Himalayas. Sandal trees had been recorded growing in the Jawalaji area of Kangra district and in Bilaspur. In view of the economic importance of the sandalwood, the department prepared a plan for starting a project for adapting the sandal trees on a commercial scale in Himachal Pradesh. The main constraints of spreading of plantation of sandal outside its limited habitat are heavy biotic pressure, particularly grazing, browsing and trampling of young trees by cattle, lack of nursery and field plantation technologies, poor and slow rate of seed germination under Himalayan conditions.

67	6	28-Nov-98	THE TELEGRAPH	Beauty and the beast	Shahtoosh, the most elegant wispy shawl of soft texture can be folded into the pocket has perpetrated years of merciless killing. The source material of shahtoosh is the skin of the chiru antelope, mainly inhabiting in the Tibetan plateau of China, a few of them seasonally troop into the Ladakhi regions of India. The dwindling numbers of chiru due to constant hunting, the total population came down to 200 to 220 only in northwestern Ladakh. The slaughterer Tibetan antelopes are the source of shahtoosh and this precious raw wool is the main barter item for tiger bones from India. The smuggled wool is bundled into Kashmir through western Nepal to be woven into shawls and scarves. In the last few years, the trade in shahtoosh has boomed, as it is prized as a fashion accessory in America, Europe and Japan. Though shahtoosh is still carried over remote Himalayan passes by Tibetan nomads and their yaks, a large bulk of the trade is now handled by more sophisticated traders. In the international market the shahtooshes are now fashioned for extinction of chirus, the most unusual creatures.
68	6	7-Dec-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Carpet industry in Kashmir grows as child labour suffers	While the economy of Jammu and Kashmir has been hit hard during militancy, the states carpet weaving industry actually grew during this period with both production and profit going up. As men fell to bullets, their children had no choice but to fend for themselves and earn a livelihood. Many of these destitute children thus found jobs in the carpet weaving industry. A study sponsored by UNICEF recommended health service, non-formal education and higher wages, since poverty and ignorance were the main reasons for child labour.
69	6	11-Dec-98	THE HINDU	Tribals oppose laying of railway line	The laying of the foundation stone of the Diphu-Karong railway line through Assam-Nagaland-Manipur by the Railway Minister Mr Nitish Kumar, has failed to enthuse many sections of the people in this region. The Autonomous State Demand Committee of the Karbi Along in Assam protesting against the construction of the rail line, which will pass through the proposed district of the tribals. They feel that, if the rail line becomes operational, the Kuki tribals and others will have free access to their state and that their demand for a separate State will be eclipsed.

70	6	28-Nov-98	THE TRIBUNE	Chilgoza pines face extinction	Mans greed and apathy, hostile soil conditions and insect attacks have over the years, been slowly but inexorably pushing pinus gerardiana, commonly called chilgoza or neoz pine, towards extinction in India. It is the only available species which can withstand the harsh climatic and geo-physical conditions of the dry temperature zones. This particular pine species was found only in the western Himalayas, Kinnaur and Pangi valley of Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh and a small pocket (bordering Tibet) of Kashmir in India. The scientist of Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry says the preservation steps of chilgoza pine forests have assumed importance not only because the trees have come to face extinction, but also in the context of the paramount need of arresting the heavy soil erosion in the Sutlej valley, particularly in Kinnaur.
71	6	30-Nov-98	THE TRIBUNE	Another forest disease in HP	Scientists of the Himalayan Research Group, a non-government organisation had identified the fungal disease responsible for the drying up of deodar trees. Fusarium oxysporum and Ganoderma lucidum, two dreaded fungi, are responsible for the mysterious forest disease which caused large-scale mortality of shisham (dalebergia sissoo) trees in the mid-hill areas of the state over the past two years. This is the second forest disease detected in Himachal Pradesh over the past six months. Earlier, it was the Phytophthora cinnamomi fungus which dried up over 800 deodar trees in the Chail area. The twin attack of the deadly fungi had infected thousands of shisham trees in Bilaspur, Una, Hamirpur, Kangra and parts of Mandi district. The mid-hill belt starting from Ghaghes and extending right upto Nurpur has been the worst hit. In Kangra, Dehra and Nadaun subdivision alone more than 2,000 trees have dried up.
72	6	12-Dec-98	THE TIMES OF INDIA	J&K seeks armys help to control forest fires	The official sources said thousands of trees were lost in the northern areas of Kashmir valley due to accidental fire and anti-insurgency operations by security forces in the forest during the past few months. The Jammu and Kashmir government has sought the armys help to control the forest fires caused by mortar and artillery shelling by Pakistani troops from across the line of actual control.

73	6	22-Dec-98	THE TRIBUNE	Scheme for conservation, use of herbs	Since herbal medicines have gained wide acceptance, the demand for these medicines has increased tremendously in the past few years, thus putting great pressure on natural sources. More than 40 species of medicinal plants in Himachal Pradesh have been declared endangered due to continuous extraction to meet the growing demand of the pharmaceutical industry. Vanaspati Van, an ambitious scheme for development and conservation of medicinal plants recently operating in Chamba district. It would conserve, enrich the depleting natural herbal resources and to develop the agro-techniques of the medicinal plants cultivation besides providing nature care by setting up nature care units in the region.
77	7	2-Jan-99	THE STATESMAN	Freak weather in hills might wreak ecological havoc	The snowfall has been unexpectedly less in higher reaches of Garhwal and Kumaon during the spell. With neither enough snow nor a drop of rain the forest fires raging in some pine and mixed forests have been felt uncontrolled. Forest fires in the post-fall months are more damaging for the flora than in summer. The lack of snow and rain is a cause of concern not only for botanist and conservationists but also for hydrologists. It could lead to a further shrinking of glaciers, thus endangering the perennial sources of water for the entire plains of northern India.
78	7	2-Jan-99	THE TRIBUNE	Jhelum touches record low water level	Due to the long dry spell and freezing temperature in the Kashmir valley over past few weeks, water in the Jhelum has touched a record low in past 54 years. The valley is already reeling under shortage of power supply and, is further possess to heavy decline in power production from various hydel projects due to decline in the water level in all water bodies.

79	7	5-Jan-99	THE TELEGRAPH	Kashmir forests ravaged by fires	Mysterious forest fires are ravaging conifer forests throughout the Kashmir valley threatening the loss of some rare plant species and animal in the region forever. The locals admit that timber smugglers, in tandem with forest officials, are setting the fires to destroy traces of mass deforestation, however, according to official sources, the fires occurring are the result of an exceptionally dry spell hitting the Valley. Though the Centre had launched its Forest Fire control Methods under the Eighth Plan, they are yet to be implemented in the Valley, which has the biggest forest cover.
80	7	15-Jan-99	THE BUSINESS STANDARD	Rs 450 crore tech mission plan for NE horticulture	The Centre proposes to set up a technology mission for integrated development of horticulture in the north-eastern states comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The proposed technology mission will aim at improving production and productivity of horticultural crops and ensure sustained growth through effective linkages between production, research, extension, post-harvest management and marketing.
81	7	19-Jan-99	THE TRIBUNE	Illegal mining on the rise	The large-scale illegal mining and quarrying under political protection in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh creating environmental imbalances. During last five years the water level of a number of khads, which are major source of over 200 water supply schemes has gone down and a number of water sources has already dried up due to reckless and unscientific mining. It is estimated that the state government is losing a revenue of Rs. 35 crore every year from the district alone.
82	7	20-Jan-99	THE TRIBUNE	Project eating up forests	Insecurity haunts wildlife in Himachal Pradesh with new cement plants and hydroelectric projects eating up the forest area in the state. Wildlife sanctuaries are one by one falling prey to such development projects which are being constructed by influential business houses. About 52% of the forest area in the state is undermarked and the authorities have no assessment of encroachments. It is estimated that forest area of over 25,000 hectares was under encroachments.

83	7	25-Jan-99	THE TRIBUNE	SC order upsets Himachals green felling plan	The Himachal Pradesh Forest Corporation had floated bonds to raise financial resources for which the government had approved a proposal for carrying out green felling. The Supreme Courts decision making the Centres approval of forest working plans mandatory, has upset the States plan of carrying out green felling.
84	7	28-Jan-99	THE TRIBUNE	Sinking villages of Chamba	Twenty villages in the Bakan, Bassu and Samra areas of interior Chamba district in Himachal Pradesh have started sinking because of illegal state mining effecting about 18,000 population in the region. As the only source of earning, the local resident were forced to engaged in quarrying, while the authorities were hesitant to take action against the culprits because of their political patronage. Save Himalaya, a social organisation set up by Mr. Rattan Chand is fighting the lone battle by educating and campaigning the local about the disaster, that the mining would bring for them.
85	7	3-Feb-99	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Tehri dam safe, not prone to quakes: Govt	The Centre has informed the Supreme Court that the Tehri dam was safe and did not need 3-D non-linear seismic tests. The government said the National Committee on Seismic Design Parameters (NCSDP) had termed the recommendation for such test as conservative and concluded that the dam was safe enough to withstand the maximum credible earthquake (MCE).
86	7	6-Feb-99	THE SENTINEL	Promoting Eco-friendly Tourism	The 100-years-old picturesque hill station of Darjeeling in the sub-Himalayan West Bengal stands out as a mute witness to the havoc wrought in by an increasing tourist flow. Over last five years, more than 300 hotels have sprung up in and around Darjeeling. The reckless construction activities have lead to drying up water springs, disappearing forest stretches besides massive soil erosion and landslides. Promotion of the concept of eco-tourism in the Himalayan region is considered significant in that it would go a long way in preserving the natural beauty of this mountain region.

87	7	7-Feb-99	THE TRIBUNE	Himalayan yew drying up	The Himachal Pradesh Governments decision to allow the collection and export of leaves of Himalayan yew, which is being exploited by pharmaceutical companies to manufacture medicines for treating cancer, has proved fatal for endangered species. Over the past three years, thousands of yew trees have dried up in various parts of the state and the natural regeneration of this slow-growing species is poor. While scientists at G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development have used tissue culture methods to produce saplings, replenishing the depleted reserves in the high altitude areas is difficult.
88	7	9-Feb-99	THE STATESMAN	Threat to Nepals forests may affect Indias borders	Environmentalist warned that the Nepali Governments proposal to allow a state-run body to fell trees in the Terai belt would deplete the Himalayan Kingdoms forest cover and spell doom for the bordering Indian states. Due to dwindling forest cover in the Terai, two Indian states Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have experienced devastation floods and silting problems over the past few years.
89	7	11-Feb-99	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Fungi eat into Himachals sheesham	According to a survey conducted by Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, about 30% of the sheesham plantation have been completely damaged in the state. The study has suggested that to prevent the fungi from spreading, healthy trees should be isolated and affected ones uprooted.
90	7	15-Feb-99	THE BUSINESS LINE	Co-op effort to grow tea on wasteland	The Sang Martam Tea Growerss Co-operative Society has earmarked about 1000 acres of wasteland for growing Rumtek tea with an estimated production of two lakh kilos per year. To augment tea cultivation in Sikkim, a cooperative society has produced 700 acres of land in the East Sikkim district. The memorandum of understanding signed with Makalbair Tea Estate, has agreed to set up a tea processing plant at Sang Martam by investing over Rs. 2.17 crores with 50% equity.

91	7	3-Mar-99	THE ASIAN AGE	Disaster struck Chamoli in middle of the night	A massive earthquake of 6.8 on the Richter scale struck Chamoli causing at least 100 casualties and about collapsing 170 houses, according to the initial report. It was the second time in eight years the Himalayan region of northern Uttar Pradesh had been hit by a severe earthquakes. At least 1600 people were killed in Uttarkashi, 1991 when an earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale hit the hilly.
92	7	17-Mar-99	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Tea production severely affected by drought in Tripura	Tea was the most important agro-based industry in the State with a production of six million kg per annum and about 6000 hectare of land were under tea cultivation. The production was severely hamstrung in Tripura this year following unprecedented drought. According to Tea Association of India, the drought would push the production of annual crop by 20-25%.
93	7	28-Mar-99	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	600MW Kameng hydel project with NEEPCO coming up	The government of Arunachal Pradesh has decided to work out an agreement with the North East Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) to construct the 600 megawatt Kameng hydel power project. Participating in the discussion on 1999-2000 fiscal budget, the Chief Minister said reports on many other hydel projects would be prepared, which provide ample opportunities for the people to improve their standard of living.
94	7	30-Mar-99	THE BUSINESS LINE	Tehri dam safe from quake impact	The 6.8 magnitude earthquake that rocked a wide sweep of area across the northern part of the India claimed over 100 lives in Chamoli, left the controversial Tehri dam structure unaffected. Conflicting views on the structural safety of the Tehri dam and hydro power project to high magnitude earthquakes have been expressed by scientists. Seismologists at the Indian Meteorological Department said the damage was low perhaps because the foci of the earthquake was 30 km deep inside the earth, in contrast, the Uttarkashi one occurred in 1991, around 12 km deep.

95	7	31-Mar-99	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Frequency of earthquakes has increased in the Himalayan region	The seismicity in the Himalayan region has increased, as in the past eight years the region has experienced two earthquakes with a magnitude over 6.5 on the Richter scale. In seismically active areas, a quaked measuring more than 6.5 may occur once in 20 years, according to the scientist of Indian Meteorological Department(IMD). The IMD admits that the north and north-eastern movement of the Indian plate at the rate of about 5 cm per year and its collision with the Eurasian plate, which is relatively stationary, makes the Himalayan region quake-prone.
96	7	4-Apr-99	THE STATESMAN	Rubber stretching Tripura ecology: Report	Despite its new-found tag of the second rubber capital of India, a recent study into the impact of rubber plantation reveals its telling effect on the states fragile ecology. The report says the plantation may lead to an ecological and socio-economic disaster in the tiny state by destroying the top soils and causing deforestation that may end up causing desertification. However, the Tripura government pins a lot of hope on the states rubber cultivation, the World Bank also supports projects to raise new plantations.
97	7	18-Apr-99	THE PIONEER	Hot summers spark forest fires in HP	With the mercury shooting up abnormally in the first half of April, conditions have become similar to the one prevalent in June when summer is at its peak. The pine forest, prone to fires because of highly combustible nature along with the failure of the forest department to take necessary preventive measures has aggravated the problem. Though the department has released Rs. 1 crore for marking fire lines, controlled burning and other preventive measures, these are not carried out by the field staff in the right earnest.
98	7	1-May-99	THE ASIAN AGE	Dehra Dun institute to make coal from leaves	The Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) in Dehradun has developed a technology to make coal out of chir leaves which cover the floor of forest in the Garhwal hills. According the chairman of GMVN, the technology would not only prevent forest fires by removing these leaves from the forests but would also create employment opportunities and resolve the problem of non-availability of fuel for villagers.

99	7	1-May-99	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Air of Chamoli hills today is more poisonous than Delhis	The Ganga is running black in the hills and its discharge has unseasonably increased. The fuses opened by the earthquake are pouring out dark soil into streams that flow into it. The sky too is black with forest fire smoke and ash filament floating in the air. The Alaknanda and Bhagirathi, blistering hot winds howl throughout the day, even at heights over 6,000 feet, noon-temperature crosses 35 degree Celsius. All vegetation has turned into tinder, as it has not rained for more than six months. Because of the thick acrid smoke filling the air, the respiratory diseases, eye, and stomach ailments had increased tremendously.
100	7	1-May-99	THE NORTH EAST TIMES	Rare cranes found in Arunachal	A wintering site of the black necked crane, a globally endangered species has been found in the Zemingthang valley of Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh. Earlier the cranes also wintered in Apatani valley of Subansiri district of the state, but they vanished in 1960s due to the development of large townships. The environmentalist pointed out an interesting observation, that all the wintering and breeding sites of these cranes happened to be located in few localities of Tibet and Ladakh, where Buddhism is the practicing religion. This probably indicates that religion can play an important role in wildlife conservation.
101	7	1-May-99	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Forest fires in HP threaten erosion of land, flora, fauna	Inadequate rainfall during last winter and early onset of summer this year have resulted in about 200 forest fires in Himachal Pradesh. According to States forest minister, out of 35,407 km ² forest area in the state, 8,267 km ² were prone to fire incidents. A six-year project called modern forest control methods under a Centrally sponsored schemes is yet to be implemented due to insufficient grant from the ministry.

102	7	3-May-99	THE STATESMAN	Officials lock horns with van gujjars at national park	Faced with the task of evacuation for the proposed Rajaji National Park near Dehradun, the park authorities are in confrontation with the van gujjars. Gujjars, the nomadic tribes inhabited in the area are not agreed to shift to the rehabilitation sites at Pathri and Gandhikhata in the neighboring Hardwar district. After having failed to force the dwellers to leave the forests, the authorities are believed to project them as poachers and timber smugglers.
103	7	4-May-99	THE STATESMAN	DGHC flouts SC order, fells trees	In a blatant violation of the Supreme Court order, banning felling of trees, the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) felled silver firs in the heart of Singalia National Park, which was discovered and seized by the forest department in a raid. The park which is the highest in the state, is habitat of the endangered red panda and also the home of the daphnemunal - a rare breed of pheasant. This is not the first time that the DGHC has shown scant disregard for natural environment.
104	7	10-May-99	THE SENTINEL	Nagaland losing its forest cover	The eastern districts of Nagaland are facing environmental degradation as miscreants join hands with jhum cultivators spelling doom for the lush green forests area. According to official sources, the green almost destroyed in adjoining districts of Mon, Tuensang, and Meluri subdivision of Phek district. The rivers and streams had dried up this year causing acute drinking water shortage in various parts of Mon and Tuensang. The Supreme Courts ban on timber felling has not helped the situation as commercial exploitation during the past few years have adversely affected the tropical and sub-tropical rain forests in the foothills.
105	7	17-May-99	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	1,700 trees axed, Nainital bleeds	Inspite of several protest marches demanding expeditious action against the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Sanstha for felling 1,700 teak and sal trees on the land recently purchased by it, the guilty are yet to be punished. Though the forest department had lodged an FIR a month ago and claimed to be carrying out an investigation under the Tree Protection Act, no arrests have been made so far.

106	7	25-May-99	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Jhum cultivation a threat to environment	The sifting cultivation by slash and burning of forests in hills, popularly know as jhumming, is being practiced by the tribals of North Cachar Hills in Assam. With the fast increasing population in hills, more and more new villages are coming up by clearing and destroying forest cover, thereby jhum area getting extended. This age-old system of cultivation not only causes soil erosion and landslides, but also deforestation threatening the environment, flora and fauna - even the very base of the hills. Until now, crores of rupees had already been spent in the name of integrated jhum control and development programme but the practice of jhum cultivation has not yet been controlled.
107	7	25-May-99	THE TELEGRAPH	Wedding belles green Garhwal	Every monsoon, young girls plant seedlings in a fallow area with the consent of the village head and the Mahila Mangal Dal, a womens welfare organisation. The planting is very organised, run by a group christened Maitee (girls parents home), when the saplings become full-grown trees, they are named after the girl who planted them. The Maitees unique tree-planting custom finds mention even in most wedding cards. The unique social custom, started as late as 1994 at Gwaldam, is now spreading to other villages, raising hopes of a greener Garhwal.
108	7	1-Aug-99	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Extinction of snow leopards threatens mountain bio-diversity	Though the demand for fur made by snow leopard pelts may have gone down, but the demand for bones and body parts as marketable items for use in traditional Chinese medicine has gone up, according to the Conservation Director of the International Snow Leopard Trust. The estimated figure of this endangered species is about 4500-7500 are distributed through the mountain ranges of China, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and other south Asian states. Erosion of traditional knowledge, reduced herder vigilance, increased livestock numbers, and other animal husbandry changes are emerging as a grave threat to the endangered cat. Conservationists see an urgent need to continue long term research, which should focus on management issues like livestock depredation and rangeland competition between domestic stock and wild ungulates.

109	7	7-Jun-99	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Ban all construction in and around Badrinath: Experts	On earthquake and landslide workshop held at Gopeshwar, experts said that any building activity around Badrinath caused a great danger of erosion and landslides in the extremely fragile environment. Earth scientists, engineering experts and environmentalists had a dialogue and exchange of views on building safe houses and taking other measures of survival in that seismic zone, where tectonic activity was taking place continuously. A suggestion was made for setting up a Himalayan Disaster Mitigation Centre, which would have all the data of seismic activity.
110	7	15-Jun-99	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Environmentalists up in arms against Himachal Govts move	The de-notification of a part of the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) in Kullu district by the Himachal Pradesh Government for setting up of a hydro-electric project, is being opposed by environmentalists. About 10 km ² of the GHNP itself and a lot of its buffer zone would be affected by proposed 2051MW Parbati Hydel Project at the district. The environmentalists opposing the exclusion of this area from great ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphologic and geological importance of GHNP and demanding restoration of the status of the Park.
111	7	10-Jun-99	THE ECONOMIC TIMES	Disaster up north: melting glaciers may unleash floods	Melting Himalayan glaciers may unleash a torrent of floods in mountain valleys of north India within next 40 years and after flood these rivers would dry up due to lack of glaciers. The study reveal by environmentalist Syed Iqbal Hasnain that the rate of ice accumulation is lower than that of melting due to global warming, thereby triggering death of Himalayan glaciers. Himalayan glaciers in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim have reduced considerably, and by the year 2035 most of them will vanish at their present rate of decline. Recession of glaciers may decrease water resources and increase glacier related hazards like floods caused by sudden outburst of glacier lakes cause a serious threat in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and China.

112	7	1-Jul-99	THE STATESMAN	Himalayan glaciers recede	Incidents of landslides, changes in river regimes and floods will increase as Himalayan glaciers including the Gangotri glacier recede at a phenomenal rate, according to experts of Geological Survey of India. Most geologists agree that global warming combined with large scale deforestation and increased human activity near the glacier have led to the increased rate of recession. In spite of the fact that Himalayan waters are the lifeblood of millions of Indians, the Government is ignoring, even various initiatives being taken out by our neighboring countries to monitor glaciers.
113	7	20-Jul-99	THE HINDU	Loktak lake dying a slow death	Loktak, the biggest natural lake in north-east India is dying, as out of its 289 km ² area, at least 206 km ² is covered by bio-mass, according to scientists. About 30 small rivers in Manipur along with 2,000 fisherfolk, who have made home on the lake, are dumping all kinds of debris into the lake. Before the construction of Ithal Barrage for power generation, most of the rivers did not empty themselves into the lake and flowed towards Myanmar, but the Loktak Hydroelectric Project had aggravated the problem.
114	7	21-Sep-99	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Shell-shocked animals disappear from J-K	The rare species of Kargil in Jammu & Kashmir disappeared from their native areas after the outbreak of recent Indo-Pak conflict. The victims are snow leopards, wolves, brown bear and ibex, mostly found in Drass, Batalik, Kargil and Karakurum in Turtuk - all affected by the recent two-month-long conflict between India and Pakistan. Though the wildlife warden in Ladakh confirmed that the two-month-long shelling in Kargil did affect the wildlife, with rare species having migrated to safer places, but denied any casualties among these. With Pakistani shells still occasionally hitting the area, these wild animals are not returning to their native places.

115	7	27-Sep-99	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Gangotri may vanish in ten years: experts	The Gangotri Conservation Project (GCP), jointly administered by Government of India, State Government of Uttar Pradesh, Himalayan Environment Trust, environment experts and local representatives have recommended a monitoring station at Gangotri in view of disturbing reports about the Bhagirathi river shrinking drastically. The main objectives set out for GCP are to green and clean the Gangotri basin, develop low cost sanitation schemes and schemes for solid waste disposal, develop alternative energy programmes for conservation of environment with maximum involvement of local populace.
116	7	2-Oct-99	THE TRIBUNE	Mining aggravates floods	The rainy season, this year has left an unbearable tale of disaster, thousands of people homeless, hundreds of acres of fertile land has been ravaged by the floods in Himachal Pradesh. The state government has suffered an estimated loss of Rs. 500 crore. In Kangra district alone over 100 link roads were damaged and yet to be restored. The reckless, unscientific mining and quarrying in the state have been attributed to be a major cause for the repeated flashfloods in this region. It is revealed that illegal mining and quarrying has taken a new turn in the past few years and political interference in the functioning of Forest and Mining Departments had worsened the matters. Experts feel that if no effective measures are adopted and sincere efforts made, the fury of floods will continue to hit the ecology of the state year after year.
117	7	6-Oct-99	THE SENTINEL	NSCN, DHD ultras denuding NC Hills, Karbi Anglong forests	The rich forest cover of the two hill districts of North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong is under threat of denudation as the banned NSCN and local militant outfits are indulging in the illegal felling of trees by issuing permits to some timber contractors. In spite of being fully aware of the militants activities, the police officials are helpless to take proper action against the culprits, because of the difficult terrain in the border areas due to extremely harsh conditions and the shortage of adequate staff.

118	7	19-Oct-99	THE TELEGRAPH	Anti-quake building in N-E planned	The Indian Concrete Institute in Manipur is designing earthquake resistant buildings in the North-East to reduce the damage induced by the frequent tremors as the region is considered one of the most earthquake-prone zones in the world. Engineers and architects in the state have made a breakthrough in developing quake-resistant buildings. Prof. S.K. Jain of IIT has recommended the replacement of the traditional timber, with alternate material without changing the quake-resistant features of the Assam-type houses.
119	7	21-Oct-99	THE STATESMAN	Bid to preserve Wullar lake	To preserve the world famous Wullar lake in North Kashmir, the largest freshwater lake in Asia, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests has banned all types of industrial activity within seven km of the lake. In a notification issued recently, the ministry has impressed upon the State Pollution Control Board that no industrial activity should be allowed within the prescribed limit. Besides the lake has been declared a wetland, also been identified by the Environment Department for special attention in environmental point of view.
124	8	6-Jan-00	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Climate inversion makes Himachal hills warmer	The climate inversion for the second consecutive year has made the hill not only warmer than most places in the plains of north India but also fog free. Locals and tourists can be seen enjoying the bright sunshine in Himachal Pradesh, but the prolonged dry spell is giving cause for concern to fruit growers. Particularly the apple belt is the most worried lot, as lack of snow in the last few years has already ruined the apple crop.
125	8	6-Jan-00	THE STATESMAN	Sunny Darjeeling faces water crisis	The unusual sunny weather for past few days might delight the tourist in Darjeeling hills, but both residents and the civic authorities fear an impending water crisis. The reason being that, there has been little rainfall since the monsoons ended here. The first sign of water crisis are already visible, as supplies from the local municipality are available only once in three days.

126	8	12-Jan-00	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Arunachal hydel projects to improve power situation	The 21,000 mw hydel power projects of Dehang and Subansiri in Arunachal Pradesh, would bring about significant changes in the power sector on their completion within a decade. The worlds biggest hydel power project at Dehang, three dams would be created at Puding (11,000 mw), Kaylng (700 mw), and Rotung (1700 mw). Work for the two giant projects has been entrusted to National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC) and the centre has asked to complete the first phase of projects by 2008 and the remaining phases by 2012.
127	8	17-Jan-00	THE TRIBUNE	Parbati project can meet power crisis	The 800 mw Parbati Hydroelectric Project (stage II), can go a long way in easing the power crisis, provided the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) takes up work on a war-footing. Parbati, a tributary of the river Beas, has an identified hydel potential of 2051 mw. The project will be executed in three stages by the NHPC under an agreement entered into with the Himachal Pradesh Government last year. Considering the feasibility, stage II will be taken up first for execution. The work of remaining stages I and III with capacities 750 and 501 mw respectively, would be taken up later.
128	8	21-Jan-00	THE TRIBUNE	HPs go-ahead for felling	Plagued with perennial financial crisis, the fund starved Himachal Pradesh Government has finally given the go-ahead for felling of green trees. The decision, to lift the 16-year-old moratorium on felling of green trees was taken by the Cabinet last month, is likely to double the states forest revenue from the next financial year. However, felling will be carried strictly in accordance with the forest working plans for each division duly approved by the Centre as laid down by the Supreme Court. As a result over one lakh cubic metres of additional timber will be extracted from the states forest annually.
129	8	22-Jan-00	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Promotion of medicinal plants necessary for rural uplift	Promotion of cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants was needed to uplift the living standards of the rural people, said science and technology minister of Sikkim. Inaugurating a four-day training programme on production and processing of medicinal and aromatic plants at Gangtok, the minister said that the state has excellent climatic condition for cultivation of improved and high-yielding varieties of those plants and asked the farmers to adopt these techniques.

130	8	26-Jan-00	THE TRIBUNE	Mining poses ecological threat	Palampur, a famous tourist resort and one of the beautiful town of Himachal Pradesh, has been facing serious environmental threat because of reckless and unscientific mining. In the absence of political and administrative will the deforestation and mining is still going on unchecked in the state. At present the state government has no policy for the grant of mining lease in the state resulting in largescale felling of trees, barrenness of hills and heavy pollution. Besides, the government is also losing huge revenue causing loss of the state exchequer.
131	8	31-Jan-00	THE STATESMAN	Jhum farming threatens Nagaland bio-diversity	Nagalands rich agro-biodiversity is under threat due to the age-old practice of slash and burn method of cultivation, popularly known as jhum cultivation. About 80% of the Nagas depend on jhum cultivation. After two consecutive years, they leave the field for the next nine years for the jhum cycle to come. This practice has led to disastrous consequences for the eco-system in the state. However, an agro-forestry project called Nagaland Environment Protection and Economic Development (NEPED) has been operating since 1995. The main objective of NEPED is not to leave the jhum field fallow after cultivation by planting trees before jhum cycle comes, thus make jhum cultivation remunerative.
132	8	31-Jan-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Plan to construct airstrip annoys environmentalists	The Uttar Pradesh state governments decision to construct an airstrip near the famous Valley of Flowers has not gone down well with social activists and environmentalists of the area. The area located near the famous Sikh shrine of Hemkund Sahib, is a virtual treasure trove of countless varieties of high altitude alpine flowers. The construction of the airstrip is apparently aimed at providing additional facilities to pilgrims as well as tourists visiting the area. However, environmentalists fear that the construction of the airstrip would harm the fragile ecology and expanse of flower meadows.

133	8	31-Jan-00	THE TRIBUNE	Wildlife management poor	Despite a vast network of sanctuaries, zoological parks and mini zoos, the management of the ever-dwindling wildlife reserves in Himachal Pradesh continues to be a state of neglect. Irrational and inadequate set-up of the wildlife wing coupled with the shortage of funds and trained manpower are coming in the way of the effective management of wildlife. While the Centre has been insisting that each state should have an independent set-up for the proper management of wildlife, in Himachal the control of many sanctuaries remains with the territorial wing.
135	8	21-Mar-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Rainwater harvesting in U.P. hills likely	Over 5,000 villages in the rural areas of the Uttar Pradesh hill districts comprising a population of about 50 lakh have been facing water scarcity as the natural water resources are drying very fast. Even multi-crore watershed management project programmes launched in the early eighties with the help of the World Bank and schemes for the regeneration of natural water resources had not made any difference to the water scenario. In this context an ambitious scheme is afoot for rainwater harvesting in the 11 hill districts of western UP and a high-powered committee of the Central Ground Water Harvesting Authority had been asked to prepare a blueprint of the scheme.
136	8	2-Mar-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Eco-vigilantes raise alarm as HP lifts ban on tree-felling	The Himachal governments recent decision of to allow tree felling in the state for lining its cash-starved coffers has upset environmentalists and politicians. Over one lakh cubic metres of timber is given to the villagers every year and over 50,000 trees are felled annually at throwaway prices. The state government had also set a price for protecting the trees and approached the Centre seeking compensation for preserving the green cover in the Himalaya. But the non-acceptance of this logic, the fate of the trees in Himachal now hangs in the balance.

137	8	4-Mar-00	THE STATESMAN	Kashmir lakes shrink due to encroachment	Though the state government to save the Dal lake in Srinagar has spent crores of rupees, the picturesque lake has shrunk due to illegal encroachment. The same is the situation of other three important lakes Wullar, Anchaar, and Nigeen in Kashmir. To conserve the dying lake the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests has banned all types of industrial activity within 7km of the lake, but the state government has not taken this seriously. Even the minister could not spell out how the Rs. 308 crore package meant for Dal lake had been spent.
138	8	1-Mar-00	THE BUSINESS LINE	Hedgerow farming to check soil erosion	Scientist at GBPIHED feels hedgerows farming is the best way to control soil erosion in the hilly north-eastern region. Speaking at training programme on Appropriate technology for a soil conservation farming system at Doimukh near Itanagar the scientist admits that the Institute has been trying to popularise the Sloping Agriculture Land Technology (SALT), a package technology on soil conservation and food production. Crops could be grown in between contoured rows of nitrogen fixing trees, which would be planted in double rows to make hedgerows. These hedgerows would help in maintaining and improving soil fertility, minimising soil erosion and providing food and income for the farmers. The system would also help in water conservation in rain-fed areas.
139	8	4-Mar-00	THE TRIBUNE	Desilting kills 80 pc of trout	For the past several years the production of trout in Himachal rivers has been reduced to one-fourth of its natural capacity. This was reported from Brot, having main tourist attraction of PSEB reservoir and trout fish farm in Mandi district. The PSEB repairs and desilts the two reservoirs annually and 70-80% of the marine life is destroyed due to desilting. According to local residents every year when the reservoirs are drained out for desilting, trout die in tones and the PSEB officials supply them to their superiors, even they do fishing in the reservoirs also. The most serious aspect of the problem is that one of the rare species of trout is on the verge of extinction. The attitude of the PSEB staff and ignorance of Fisheries Department have caused a huge loss to the states endangered marine life as a whole and trout in particular.

140	8	6-Mar-00	THE STATESMAN	Oustees to resist Mahakali dam	Even before the launch of the proposed Mahakali dam at Pancheshwar in Uttarakhand, a clash of interests is brewing between the projects opponents and protagonists. The Mahakali project is understood to be aiming at the highest-ever dam in Asia and destined to submerge dozens of hamlets in the river valley stretching across the border between India and Nepal. The height of the dam could be 315 meters, which is 50 meters higher than the Tehri dam, now under construction in the teeth of opposition. The campaign against the proposed dam and its large reservoir is currently being spearheaded by a group of voluntary workers, backed by Sarvodaya activists based in the hills of Uttar Pradesh, have been drumming up steady support for their anti-big dam campaign.
141	8	15-Mar-00	THE SENTINEL	Eco-tourism is the only sustainable industry in Sikkim	Asserting government disfavoured reckless tourism which could destroy Sikkims cultural identity, the tourism minister emphasized on eco-tourism keeping in view the States culture and character. According to him, Sikkim was one among the very few states, which had put into practice a tourism action plan for the next 15 years for the systematic and organized growth of the sector. The government is keen to involve the private sector for promoting eco-tourism in a major way, realizing that tourism is the only sustainable industry in the State.
142	8	6-Mar-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	National parks are no blessing for hill people	The state government is liberal in declaring parks and sanctuaries since they get a lot of money from the global agencies, but parks take away the traditional rights of the people to forest resources. People in remote villages inside the 472 km ² Gobind Pashu Vihar in Uttarakhand, a sanctuary for the Himalayan snow leopard and the rare musk deer, are now in arms against such sanctuaries. The life at Sakhri, in the bed of chirpine and oak forests at an altitude of 6,000 ft is a sleepy village of about 1,000 people has not been the same ever since the Pashu Vihar was set up, as the park authorities are threatening to oust them from here and not allowing to graze goats inside the park. Out of total 56 lakh populations, 11 parks and sanctuaries in the region affect nearly 15 lakh.

143	8	18-Mar-00	THE TELEGRAPH	Building ban in hills	A government appointed committee has recommended immediate expansion of Darjeeling town and a ban on building constructions in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong as a precaution against recurring landslides in the hills. The committee has prescribed mapping of landslide-prone areas across the hills and their categorization into high, moderate, low-risk and safe zones for construction; development of drainage system; road repair and control on traffic movement; relocating residents in high risk areas; development of alternative roads including by-pass at Darjeeling. In a report prepared over the past two years, the panel recommends a comprehensive development plan for Darjeeling hills and cautions the government that disaster will strike again if construction activities are not restricted.
144	8	20-Mar-00	THE ECONOMIC TIMES	J&K may wrap up Dal conservation project	Dal, a post-glacial lake is one of the major tourist attraction in Kashmir is fast dying. Over two lakh dwellers on its vast catchment have been dumping their sewage and other solid wastes directly into the lake even as over 80,000 tonnes of silt comes from its denuded peaks in the catchment. After throwing millions into the lake, Jammu & Kashmir government is reviewing its Rs. 500 crore conservation plan. Possibilities are being explored if the lake could be protected without shifting over 60,000 people living in 58 hamlets and around 1,400 houseboats.
145	8	20-Mar-00	THE BUSINESS AND POLITICAL OBSERVER	Rubber farming: for rehabilitation of Tripura tribals	Hundreds of tribals, who were habituated in shifting cultivation and slash and burn method and denuded the forest area, now have been rehabilitated in rubber cultivation scheme. The initiative of the Rubber Board and the World Bank for the rehabilitation of the tribals began in 1992 in West Tripura district with a target of 1,500 hectares of land under rubber cultivation, now the state has emerged as second largest rubber growing state in India. Despite resistant by locals and charges of environmental hazard by rubber cultivation, the World Bank has rated the tribal development plan in the state as one of the best projects for the worlds indigenous people.

146	8	22-Mar-00	THE STATESMAN	Highrises, deforestation pose threat to Sikkim ecology	Mushrooming of multi-storey building and rampant deforestation in parts of Sikkim are posing a threat to its environment. Erosion of embankments on Teesta and Rangeet rivers in the state is alarming while the Mangan market in North Sikkim district faced the threat of being washed away into the Teesta. According to the official of the urban development department, many eight-storey building had come up over the past five years in Gangtok and Tadong towns though these areas were earthquake-prone.
147	8	24-Mar-00	THE TRIBUNE	More than 500 khair trees felled	In another forest scandal more than 500 khair trees have been axed unauthorisedly in Bhadsali shamlat forest in Una division of Himachal Pradesh, although revenue as well as forest departments took no notice of it. Instead of taking action they invariably tried to cover up the lapses and shielded the guilty field staff. More often than not they even refused to show the record. The flying squad wing, which was set up with the objective of checking forest offences, has become an object of ridicule.
148	8	31-Mar-00	THE TRIBUNE	Himachal to have watershed projects	The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) will launch a watershed development programme in the Himachal districts with low irrigation development and preponderance of SC & ST population. The programme envisages to spread the message of participatory watershed development involving government agencies, NGOs, agricultural research institutions, banks, and village watershed development committees. The village communities through village watershed committees, which will be assisted by NGOs, would implement the project.
149	8	1-Apr-00	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Garhwal sal forests fall prey to climate change	Well cover a lakh trees in the dense sal (shorea robusta) forest belt in Garhwal foothills are sick and dying as a result of climate change. The change in environment leading to high humidity in sal forests has brought heavy infestation of a metallic dark-brown beetle known as sal heartwood borer (hoplocerambyx spinicornis). This heartwood borer may be one of the causes of imminent death of sal, although the forest department has made the sal as monoculture, without the support of other broadleaf trees that used to grow with it.

150	8	3-Apr-00	THE STATESMAN	Not a drop to drink in drenched Cherrapunjee	Cherrapunjee records the worlds highest rainfall suffers from acute drinking water scarcity. About 50,000 people of Cherrapunjee block in the East Khasi hills of Meghalaya with no choice but to store rainwater as there is no major water supply plant. Though the Public Health Engineering Department is there, none in Cherrapunjee can boast of the departments efficiency in providing safe drinking water to the people of this remote block.
151	8	4-Apr-00	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Vanaspati project launched in Himachal Pradesh	The Union Ministry of Health and Ayurveda has recently launched an ambitious Vanaspati Van project for development and conservation of medicinal plants in the alpine region of Himachal Pradesh with an outlay of Rs. 8.27 crore. The Ayurveda Minister said that out of 3,000 flowering plant species, more than 500 species were found to be having medicinal properties. More than 40 species of medicinal plants in Himachal Pradesh had been declared endangered. The Himachal Government had constituted a society for cultivation of medicinal plants, organize training programme to generate awareness of the utility of medicinal herbs.
152	8	11-Apr-00	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	AIDS takes epidemic form in Manipur	HIV/AIDS has taken an epidemic form in bordering Indo-Myanmar with the killer disease fast spreading to all the districts of Manipur. Although the this small state in the north-eastern region occupies third rank after Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in the country in respect of full blown AIDS cases, but the occurrence rate of in the state is much higher than the others. According to a finding of Manipur State AIDS Control Society there are 38,789 HIV infected patients while the State recorded 9,732 patients till February. Unlike others, in Manipur the disease is being transmitted more through sharing of needles and syringes by the injectable drug users (IDUs). The sero-prevalence rate in the State among IDU had gone up from nil to 50% in just one year.

153	8	15-Apr-00	THE OBSERVER OF BUSINESS & POLITICS	Tourist inflow: Bane for Sikkims lake paradise	At 12,310 ft above sea level, the Tsomgo, a picturesque lake in Sikkim is increasingly being threatened by pollution caused by a growing number of tourists. The placid lake, located 35km east of state capital Gangtok remains frozen during the winter months until mid-May. Though an environmental organization has undertaken a clean-up of the lake during off-season, but tourism has had a telling effect on its fragile ecosystem, spawning a haphazard Shanty Bazaar around it.
154	8	16-Apr-00	THE PIONEER	Mining laws being flouted in Himachal	Mining laws are allegedly being flouted in Himachal Pradesh, apparently with the connivance of the authorities and without prior permission of the forest department. Most of these mines are situated in the tribal areas of Bharmour in Chamba district and Kahaniyara in Kangra district, where unscientific indiscriminate quarrying causes lot of devastation. No joint inspection of the mining areas was conducted with the forest department before giving these lucrative mines to the influential people. Besides, the district authorities, ignoring the pleadings of the forest department, the government was also not allegedly adopting strict measures to recover arrears of royalty amounting to over Rs.3.82 crore from the mining lessees in the state.
155	8	20-Apr-00	THE PIONEER	After bounty snowfall, it is forest fires	An unusually hot summer has triggered off forest fires in the first half of April this year in the mid-hill areas of Himachal Pradesh, which witnessed 19 sessions of snowfall in January. Although forest fires are not unusual during summer, the abnormal weather condition prevailing in the region for the past few months have made things worse. The pine forests, which are prone to fires, have been the worst-hit. The failure of the forest department to take necessary preventive measures has aggravated the problem.

156	8	24-Apr-00	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Scorching heat burns valley apple orchards	Delicious and Maharaja the best varieties of apples grown in the Kashmir valley are in danger due to abnormal temperature. According to meteorological department the excess heat shortens the period of ripe resulting smaller size and dull in colour. Rafiabad, Baramulla and Sopore fall in the highland region, which supplies 60% of total apples cultivated here are going to suffer most due to heat.
157	8	17-Apr-00	THE TRIBUNE	J&K licenses killing of endangered species	Though hunting of endangered species is banned in most parts of the country, the Wildlife Act of Jammu & Kashmir licenses killing of five types of scheduled listed animals, killing of which is totally banned by central and international wildlife acts. The state Wildlife Act, 1978 provides rules for issuing various kind of hunting licenses to Indian and foreigners by the Wildlife Warden and even trophies are given to the best shooters under the Royal game. This includes hunting of Tibetan antelope, ibex, Tibetan wolf and gazelle of Ladakh in-lieu-of prescribed license fees. The amount thus collected goes to the state exchequer as royalty for indulging in the killing of these animals and birds under royal sports. Under growing pressure from various groups, the state government set up a sub-committee in December 1996, but neither any recommendations nor any amendments has yet made to the Act for protecting the endangered species.
158	8	3-May-00	THE PIONEER	Kashmiris becoming eco conscious	A severe dry spell last summer has taught the people of Kashmir the value of protecting the environment, with many taking to planting trees and informing the authorities of illegal logging to prevent catastrophes in the future. The reduce flow of water in the mountain streams and the river Jhelum, the lifeline of Kashmir Valley last year, caused widespread concern among the people. Kashmiris have become more conscious of the need to preserve forests, keen to plant trees lining their field and vacant plots in their villages. There was also a considerable amount of public cooperation on the government effort to dredge Dal lake, a landmark in Srinagar, as the surface area of the lake increased from 11 to 14 km ² .

159	8	5-May-00	THE TRIBUNE	Hydel projects threat to Chambas ecology	Environmentalists of Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh have expressed grave concern over the threat to ecology caused by the hydropower projects, as the river Ravi is becoming a dumping site for debris and silt of these projects. The environmental meet held at Chamba opposed the setting up a cement plant in the district would play havoc with the greenery of the region. The meeting observed that these projects were causing landslips, soil erosion and degradation of environment enormously as the geological formation of the Chamba zone was quite fragile.
160	8	9-May-00	THE DECCAN HERALD	Ecological crisis in Himachal	The snow clad and ravishingly beautiful Himachal Pradesh, once known for its flourishing apple orchards, is now afflicted with a serious water crisis and is also facing a threat of its forest wealth. The decision of Himachal Pradesh Government to lift the 16 year old ban on felling trees for commercial purposes will only aggravate the situation. Well known environmentalist and leader of the eco-consciousness movement Chipko, Sunderlal Bahuguna, has appealed to the people to relaunch the Chipko agitation against the anti-forest policy of the State.
161	8	10-May-00	THE STATESMAN	HC bans Shahtoosh trade in J&K	In a landmark victory for wildlife conservation, the Jammu & Kashmir High Court has issued a judgment prohibiting trade in Shahtoosh in the state, followed by the public interest petition filed by the Wildlife Protection Society of India on May 1998. The fact that the trade was still permitted in the state has been the single largest hurdle in the endangered Tibetan Antelope (Chiru). These antelopes are slaughtered in thousands on the Tibetan Plateau in China for the collection of precious wool, which is then smuggled to Srinagar, the only place in the world where it is woven.
162	8	12-May-00	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Poaching rampant in Rajaji National Park	Neither forest officers nor experts are able to explain why elephant herds are leaving the Rajaji National Park and moving close to villages and towns as the reports of extensive destruction have come from adjoining areas of Garhwal foothills and farmers have demanded compensation for their destroyed crops from the local forest department. A recent census shows that the elephant population in the park has dwindled from 800 to 350. Massive illegal felling of trees and hunting of animals in the park by politically-backed forest mafia are the main reason behind it, according to villagers.

163	8	13-May-00	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Institutional reforms needed for replacing jhum cultivation: Study	Practices of jhum or shifting cultivation among the hill tribes in the north-eastern region is 9000 years old and is still an integral part of the culture, as more than 80% of the tribal population are associated with it. The permanent cultivation in the form of either wet rice or horticulture in the terraces or plains of the foothills of north-eastern states is gaining popularity, as wet rice cultivation has become the most favourable alternative source of subsistence among marginal farmers of the hill tribes. Social scientists have cautioned that this technology transformation designed to bring about a complete switch over from jhum may alienate a vast majority of the hill tribes from their land, if the changes are not accompanied by suitable institutional reforms.
164	8	21-May-00	THE STATESMAN	Wullar, then and now	Wullar lake, once quite magnificent and largest freshwater expanse in Asia, is now dying as pollution and encroachment are fast accounting for its beauty. The lake has also social and economic significance as it provides water for drinking, irrigation, besides providing a habitat and breeding ground for a variety of birds, fish and other aquatic life. If the forest and dryland degradation in the lake catchment area continues without any proper check, it is feared that the economic, social and environmental costs will be very severe.
165	8	21-May-00	THE TRIBUNE	Close 23 HP limestone mines: CMRI	The Central Mining Research Institute (CMRI) has recommended closure of 23 limestone mines employing about 5700 persons in the Sataun and Kamroo areas of Sirmour district of Himachal Pradesh. The CMRI report has pointed out that mining operations were haphazard and not conforming to the stipulated guidelines thereby resulting in environmental degradation. However, 3 mines owned by political leaders, have been found in the suitable zone among 26 mines located in the area.

166	8	22-May-00	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	UP denotifies land near Corbett	Environmentalists, wildlife-lovers are aghast at the denotification of 62 hectare of prime forest sharing boundary with the Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh. The land falls between Corbett and Sonanadi Sanctuary near Kotdwar and is considered as one of the last remaining migratory routes for elephants in the states greatly disturbed Terai belt. Even the National Park authorities were not taken into consideration in denotification order, also, none in the Environment Ministry could explain the reason for not involving either the Corbett authorities or the Advisory Committee members in such crucial move.
167	8	23-May-00	THE TRIBUNE	Successful propagation of medicinal trees in J&K	The Jammu & Kashmir Forest Research Institute (JKFRI) has successfully conducted experiments for the propagation of rare medicinal trees like Bhahmirukh, Rasount, and Harar, which are used for manufacturing important medicines including anti-cancer drugs. To give a boost to the programme, the Institute has undertaken a scheme to set up quality plant production unit at Tangmarg, where 7000 such medium-sized trees have been found natural vegetation. Vegetative propagation by raising cuttings of these trees has been necessitated as natural re-vegetation of these medicinal and other trees has been a serious problem, admits the Director of JKFRI. According to him, experiments with different treatment of root promoting hormones are also being conducted to achieve 100% success.
168	8	24-May-00	THE BUSINESS STANDARD	20% of geographical area classified as wasteland	According to Wastelands Atlas of India, about 20% of the countrys total geographical area falls under various categories of wasteland. The hilly states have a relatively large proportion of degraded lands mainly due to snow cover and degraded forests. The Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, and Sikkim recorded more than 50% of area as wastelands.

169	8	24-May-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Recovery of panther skins in Nainital raises eyebrows	The Kumaon region of Uttar Pradesh bordering China and Nepal through its Champawat and Pithoragarh districts is now proved to be a wild life parts smuggling prone area. Within a fortnight, recovery of more than 70 panthers skins in Nainital district has led to a demand for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry by a tiger protection committee of the state. According to police sources, the incidents of seizure of wild life skin parts are registered and an inquiry is on, however, no arrest has been made so far.
170	8	25-May-00	THE TIMES OF INDIA	U.P. hill areas thirsty despite host of rivers	About 60% of more than 15 thousand villages in the 12 districts of the Uttar Pradesh hill region, now proposed to be carved out as a separate Uttaranchal state, do not have portable water. Deforestation has led to drying up of hundreds of streams, which flowed amidst the greenery and large spread of roots all over the mountainside to provide moisture as well as to hold top soil in place. Besides, climatic changes are also causing some glaciers to melt in the region. Receding glacier of Gomukh and Yamunotri, the sources of two mighty rivers Ganga and Yamuna respectively in Uttarkashi district has come up with evidences. Despite the officials candidly admit the magnitude of the problem, but the U.P. hill development department does not have any information about the phenomenon.
171	8	2-Jun-00	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Fluoride poisoning in Karbi Anglong, hundreds crippled	An intense tragedy is being unfold in and around Karbi Anglong district where slow poisoning by drinking ground water in the remote part of the state is alarming. Hundreds of villagers have been affected, many of them crippled for life, because of drinking of poisonous water containing fluoride in some parts of Karbi Anglong district of Assam. Tekelanguin is the worst affected area where every fourth person has been affected by hydro-fluorosis distressing a population of nearly one lakh. The District Council authorities, alarmed over the development, has extended a water supply scheme to Tekelanguin area for supply of fluoride free water, besides massive awareness campaign.

172	8	13-Jun-00	THE ASIAN AGE	J&K hospitals dumping waste in rivers and lakes	Various hospitals and nursing homes in Jammu & Kashmir have been found grossly violating the Bio-medical Wastes Management and Handling Rules, 1998 and polluting some rivers, lakes and other water bodies and leaving many green areas infertile or turned them into pools of filth. Srinagars Anchar lake which is located next to Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Science, the biggest hospital in the state has sustained extensive damage. In this context a meeting of the advisory committee on waste management decided to take punitive action against such institutions and clinics found not conforming to the prescribed rules.
173	8	13-Jun-00	THE HINDU	Arunachal Pradesh to increase forest cover	The best aspect for nature conservation in the state of Arunachal Pradesh is its thin population and in an enviable position with 82% of its land still under forest cover. Committed to increasing the protected area network and States bio-rich areas, the WWF has launched a special package for the Namdapha Tiger Reserve committing a financial assistance of Rs. 22.17 lakhs to improve the management of the national park.
180	9	6-Jan-01	THE PIONEER	CAPART favours eco-friendly technologies in hill areas	In an workshop organised jointly by the Dehradun based Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation & CAPART, a funding agency under the Ministry of Rural Development has stressed upon the need to undertake an intensive programme of promoting appropriate technologies in the hill and mountain areas which were in harmony with bio-physical, socio-economic and institutional environment. CAPART would also initiate various programmes in collaboration with ICIMOD, Nepal for promoting sustainable development pattern in the hill as well as mountain areas of the country.
181	9	13-Jan-01	THE HINDU	Killer quake overdue in Himalayan region	Studies have shown that over 50% of the Himalayan range was overdue for a great earthquake (over 7.8 on the Richter scale). It was not possible to predict when and where the earthquake would occur, however, western Nepal, Kumaun, and western Bhutan falls under the higher probability zones. Since the Indian plate continues to push into Eurasia, it creates stresses which are periodically released in the form of earthquakes. The GPS measurements of Indian Institute of Astrophysics showed that sufficient stress had accumulated to drive a magnitude-eight earthquake along at least 50% of the Himalayas.

182	9	15-Jan-01	THE TRIBUNE	Around 4000 HIV cases in HP	The total number of HIV positive cases in Himachal Pradesh has been estimated to be between 3,500 to 4,000. The HIV sentinel surveillance data collected in 1999 indicated that over 80% of the cases were in Hamirpur, Kangra, Shimla, Bilaspur and Mandi districts of the State. Community based studies revealed that the incidence of reproductive track infection (RTI) and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) is also very high in the State.
183	9	17-Jan-01	THE TRIBUNE	Reckless quarrying a threat	Palampur town of Himachal Pradesh has been facing a serious environmental threat because of unscientific quarrying in the area. Residents are worried over large scale quarrying being carried out in the adjoining village of Lohna, as it is leading to the destruction of valuable forests. Hills in the state have been indiscriminately stripped of forest cover during the past 10 years, resulting in flash floods, landslides and a change in the rain pattern. Despite all claims made by the government, nothing worthwhile has been done to check illegal mining and quarrying.
184	9	20-Jan-01	THE TRIBUNE	J&K to have 1 lakh solar lights	In the view of power scarcity, the Jammu & Kashmir Energy Development Agency has prepared a project for installation of one lakh solar lights for UNDP/World Bank funding. It was stated that over 60,000 improved 'chullas' were being set up in the state during the current financial year under the National Programme on Improved Chullas. The Union Minister of Non-Conventional Energy Sources is assisting in the implementation of various non-conventional energy related programmes in the state.
185	9	21-Jan-01	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Slow, painful death at Corbett	Though elephant poaching is uncommon in the region but the killing of three elephants in short span has alarmed the Corbett National Park in Uttaranchal. According to park authorities the male tusker was fed nails and sharpnel to bleed it to a slow and painful death. The Park authorities admit that elephants were killed for ivory, but they did not traced out the culprits responsible of elephant killing in the Park.

186	9	23-Jan-01	THE PIONEER	Van Gujjars struggle for every drop	Although the myth persists that the Van Gujjar community, a nomadic tribe is well off, earning decently from selling milk and ghee, the reality is in stark contrast, with many families fighting impoverishment and struggling to maintain their cattle. As such, Gujjars at Rajaji National Park are dependent on the forest, their symbiosis with the environment is remarkable. But the degradation of Rajaji forest is putting immense stress on water and fodder availability, as most of the streams are running dry.
187	9	24-Jan-01	THE PIONEER	Construction in Nainital green belt banned	Pushed by popular consternation over possible adverse impact of urbanisation on the environment and ecology of the Sat Tal and the Bhim Tal lakes around Nainital, the Uttaranchal government has ordered stopping of construction work in June Estate, a massive green-belt area in the lakes vicinity. Residents have demanded that the Government reverted to the original land-use pattern of the green-belt of June Estate, notified in the master-plan of Bhim Tal town.
188	9	7-Feb-01	THE TRIBUNE	Kol dam to uproot 800 families	As many as 800 families of Mandi, Bilaspur and Solan district of Himachal Pradesh would be affected or displaced by the construction of 800MW Kol Dam Hydel Project. The villagers demand that government should undertake responsibility of their rehabilitation and compensation with assurance of employment to at least one member of each affected family. The prime cause of apprehension of the people is the nightmarish experience which the oustees of Bhakra and Poong Dams and other projects underwent over past four decades.
189	9	7-Feb-01	THE TRIBUNE	Mahseer faces extinction	Mahseer, rated as one of the best game fish in the world, is today an endangered species, undergoing slow extinction, as the construction of dams, has further threatened its survival. The Himachal Angling Association had been pressing upon the State Fisheries Department, to evolve a technology for the controlled breeding of golden Mahseer, which is the native of the Sutlej and the Beas and replenish the dwindling stock of the fish. But members of the Association regretted that the protection, propagation and development of fisheries seemed to be least interest of the government as all suggestions given by them had simply been gathering dust.

190	9	23-Feb-01	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Mizo seismologist warns of quake disaster in Aizawl	The US seismologists warned of a Gujarat like disaster in Aizawl in the event of high intensity quake in Mizoram, which falls in the highest seismic-risk zone in north-eastern region. The state capital would witness massive destruction in case of a high-intensity quake as safe building codes have not been followed in constructing high-rise building. The State Geology and Mining Wing and Central Mining Research Institute are preparing to open a Disaster Management and Mitigation Centre.
191	9	26-Mar-01	THE STATESMAN	People forced to vacate homes	Notwithstanding the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP) attempt to saffronisation of the vexed Tehri dam issue, the BJP Governments in Uttaranchal and at the Centre have sounded an alarm to abandon the old town and 125 villages around the S-shaped valley formed at the confluence to the Bhagirathi and Bhilangana, without putting in place the infrastructure in the villages that would be cut off by the submergence of the old Tehri town. VHP are to undertake fast-unto-death on the eve of the closure of the gates close to there the aging environmentalist, Mr Sunder Lal Bahugana had adopted similar forms of protest after the devastating Uttarkashi earthquake of 1991.
192	9	2-Jun-01	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	Quiet flows the garbage through Manali town	Over 80% of 1400 kilolitres of liquid waste and 24.94 tonnes of garbage ends up in the river Beas from the tourist resort Manali alone in Himachal Pradesh. The situation gets messier downstream of Manali, where Kullu, Bhuntar, Pandoh and Mandi all are dumping their garbage into the river, they get their drinking water from, as these towns have no infrastructure for waste disposal at all. The sewage treatment plants of Manali and Mandi washed away in the flash flood of 1995 and a common sewage treatment plant yet to be completed here.

193	9	June 10,2001	THE TRIBUNE	Poachers pose threat to Kugti wildlife	The greatest threat to the survival of certain wildlife species in Kugti sanctuary, Himachal Pradesh comes from poachers and the flourishing illegal trade in wildlife materials. The Kugti wildlife sanctuary, in Chamba district is the second largest sanctuary in the state, spreading in 379 km2 at an altitude ranging from 2,195 to 5,040 metres. The sanctuary is the home of largest number of faunal species in the state including the endangered snow leopard. Though the census of various species and sub-species has not been conducted for past some years, the sanctuary authorities however, not been able to detect any case of poaching so far.
194	9	13-Jun-01	THE TRIBUNE	An unwelcome project	Unmindful of the adverse effects on the environment and tourism in the Chamba region of Himachal Pradesh, the government proposes to set up a cement factory at Kalbel. The site of the controversial factory lies in the catchment basin of rivers on which two major hydroelectric projects are located, and it is feared that these projects will hit by waste from the factory. Colossal quarrying in the area will have a direct impact on the environment. Besides, experience shows that the local residents are not likely to benefit by way of getting jobs, etc. However, the project is yet to be cleared by the Centre.
195	9	12-Jun-01	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Arunachal floods: India ignored Chinas warning	The cause of flash flood in the last year in Arunachal Pradesh, is reviewed by Government of India by a high level team. Though Chinese expert rung the alarm bells, warned of a devastating flood in Yigongzangbu river in ICIMOD publication of April 2000. The Chinese warning issued quoting, a huge complex landslide occurred in the valley of the Zhamulongba stream, about 300 million cubic meters of displaced debris, soil and ice dammed the Yigongzangbu river - a large tributary of the Yarlungzapbo river (the upperstream of the Brahmaputra), in the east of Tibet. The prediction on the basis of rising water level became true when the dam did fail indeed on June 10 caused havoc in Siang with an estimated of billion rupees property losses apart from hundreds missing in the State.

196	9	19-Jun-01	THE HINDU	Plan to revolutionise hill farming	Experts and farmers have jointly prepared a plan at G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar that could revolutionise farming at all levels in Uttarakhand and other Himalayan states. Since women form a better part of the workforce engaged in agriculture activities, efforts are being made to train them in progressive farming, value addition, marketing through cooperative societies, and providing literacy skills. The VC of the University admits, if approved and properly implemented the plan will double the farm output in the region.
197	9	19-Jun-01	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Rs 40 lakh sanctioned for bird sanctuary in Sikkim	Sikkim government has sanctioned Rs 40 lakh for a bird sanctuary near the ruins of the States erstwhile Kings palace at Rabdentse in West District. The Chief Minister said that under the project the entire area would be fenced and a natural lake developed to protect the birds which include number of endangered species. Besides, the Cabinet also okayed a forest department proposal of renovating the Himalayan Zoological Park at Bulbuley near Gangtok.
198	9	26-Jun-01	THE STATESMAN	Mizoram move to fight famine	The Mizoram government has decided to combat the impending famine, expected six years from now, by purchasing the tails of the rats killed. According to officials, the best course of action would be to kill rats, said to be responsible for 80% crop damage during the infamous famine of 1959 that started the insurgency movement in the state. The committee, under the agriculture commissioner, in its report to the government suggested purchasing the rat-tails as a sure shot means to eradicate the rodents.
199	9	3-Jul-01	THE HINDU	HP plan to protect biodiversity	The Himachal Pradesh Government is planning to develop and protect various wetlands for preserving the rich bio-diversity of the state. The wetlands cover an area of 547 km ² , which is about 1% of states total geographical area, spread over an altitudinal range 450 to 5093m cover tropical, sub-tropical and alpine regions of the state. The state government departments are implementing the wetland management action plans in Renuka, Pong Dam and Chandertal towards biodiversity protection in the state.

200	9	12-Jul-01	THE TRIBUNE	HP to produce 15,000 mw by 2012	Having so far realised only about a fourth of its hydro-electric potential, Himachal Pradesh has set an ambitious target of producing 15,000 mw hydel power by 2012. The state has a hydro-electric potential over 20 thousand mw, which is nearly 25% of the total hydel power potential of the country. According to the Chief Minister, a three-pronged strategy had been chalked out to generate an additional 10,000 mw of power in the next 12 years. Ten projects were being executed in the state sector, while 14 others had been taken up by the private sectors in the state.
201	9	29-Jun-01	CENTRAL CHRONICLE	UNDP conservation drive in Nagaland	The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has taken an ambitious projects of Rs. 1.31 crore to launch a conservation drive of the endangered species in the North-East. Official sources said that concerned over the plight of endangered species and threat to the environment, the UNDP has taken up altogether 14 projects in the NE region. These projects commissioned under the Small Grants Programme (SGP), were being sponsored by the UNDP, and the Ministry of Environment & Forests and co-funded by their subsidiary agencies, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Community Cooperation Framework-I (CCF-I). The main purpose and objective of the programme was to create environmental awareness among the people of the region ranging from bio-diversity conservation to land & water management, and will act towards local solution to the global problem.
202	9	12-Jul-01	THE STATESMAN	Rs 20-cr preservation project for Dal Lake	The Jammu & Kashmir state Lakes and Waterway Development Authority (LWWDA) has formulated a comprehensive plan for Dal lake catchment development. The main objective of the project is to check the soil erosion and degradation process in the catchment area and thus arrest and bring down the sediment and the nutrient flow to the lake body to the minimum. The Rs 20 crore project, on completion would definitely go a long way for preserving the pristine glory of the famous Dal lake.

203	9	17-Jul-01	THE TRIBUNE	Threat to Devikothi wildlife	Poaching for getting skin and flesh of wild beasts for medicinal purpose has not only posed a danger to the breeding of wildlife but has also put it on the verge of extinction in the natural habitat of Devikothi dell. Spread over 100 km ² the Devikothi dell is located at an altitude ranging from 2000 to 4390m in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh bordering Jammu & Kashmir, is the habitat of several faunal species. But this wooded hillsides is not a wildlife sanctuary and does not come within the preview of the wildlife department.
204	9	24-Jul-01	THE ASIAN AGE	J&K forest officials warned for shahtoosh trade	The Jammu & Kashmir High Court issued a contempt notice to the secretary of forest and environment department of the state for the failure to implement a ban on the trade and manufacture of Kashmirs famous Shahtoosh shawls. These shawls, which are made from the wool of the endangered Tibetan antelope, protected under the Centres Wildlife Protection Act and the Convention of Internal Trade in Endangered Species Act. These antelopes are being slaughtered indiscriminately by poachers for their ultra fine under-fleece wool, and are fast moving towards extinction. According to the preliminary survey by Wildlife Trust of India, there are about 70 shahtoosh manufacturers employing an estimated 30,000 people in the state.
205	9	26-Jul-01	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Major quake to hit Shillong in 10 years	Based on the tension measurements and past movements of the India plate, a major earthquake is going to hit the Shillong plateau in the northeastern part of the country within the next decade. German geophysicists and scientists attached to the National Geophysical Research Institute, have come to this conclusion taking into consideration the speed and direction of the drift of the tectonic plates, the structure of the land masses and in particular, the measurements of the tensions between different areas. However, according to German Scientist, the exact date or the epicentre of the quake is impossible to predict.

206	10	4-Apr-02	THE SENTINEL	NGOs measures to tackle AIDS in NE	With the increasing threat from the growing menace of AIDS and the rapid spread of the HIV infection throughout the country, the NGO sector involved in combating and containing the disease have time and again designed innovative techniques and AIDS research projects to put more muscle into their efforts. In a recent study conducted by the NGO based on field surveillance data, it was found that the most vulnerable sector in this disease was the women and the children who are alarmingly poised to take the center stage in HIV epidemic in the near future. The major part of the AIDS control programme is supported by the European Commission, for which an MoU was signed between the AIDS Prevention Society and the the Commission in December 2001, the NGO will have to mobilize additional resources to meet the cost of the project, which includes scientific research related to transmission of the disease.
207	10	16-Jan-02	THE TRIBUNE	Big forest projects on the cards	According to Forest Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Rs. 60-crore Indo-UK Himachal Forestry Project had been cleared by the United Kingdom and work on it would be commenced shortly. Initially the project would be launched from Mandi and Kullu district, and will be extended to the entire state on second phase. The main thrust would be on to uplift the economic status of the beneficiaries, conservation and development of forest, plantation and preservation of forest wealth.
208	10	17-Jan-02	THE TRIBUNE	National parks converted into societies	In a bid to reduce its expenditure and encourage participation of locals in the promotion of eco-tourism, the Himachal Pradesh Government has converted the lion safari at Renuka and Great Himalayan National Park at Kufri into independent societies. These steps are being taken to make these tourist destinations self-sustainable without funds from the government. The government had decided to place the infrastructure of the forest department in the places of tourist interest at the disposal of these societies.
209	10	2-Jan-02	THE SENTINEL	State reserve forests under Naga occupation	Seven reserve forests namely, Diphu, Rengna, Doyang, Upper Dihing, Lower Dihing, Nambor Reserve forests in North-East have been encroached by the Nagas and some non-Naga tribes. Report reveals that about 92% of total 88,380 ha land occupied by the encroachers due to the sheer negligence on part of the successive state governments.

210	10	9-Jan-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Protection of wildlife in NC Hills district demanded	Following wanton killing of wildlife in North Cachar Hills, the rare varieties of wildlife are on the verge of extinction. Days are not far when the district of North Cachar Hills, the natural habitat of large number of wild animals and birds would turn into a place without animals. Several organisations including the Society for Prevention of Cruelty of Animals and Haflong-based Organisation of Aborigines for Social Interaction among Societies (OASIS) demanded the establishment of wildlife wing under the forest department and the Barail range should be kept reserved for wild animals.
211	10	13-Jan-02	THE WEEK	The lost battle: Dam will submerge Tehri town	For the opponents of the Tehri dam project in Uttaranchal, the battle is well and truly lost. The Chipko leader Surderlal Bahugunas marathon fasts opposing dam construction are history, as his Jhuggi on the bank of river Bhagirathi is on the verge of submergence. Several committees have indicated the project as a safety hazard in a highly seismic region yet the first phase of the dam is fast nearing completion. The town of Tehri, along with 22 surrounding villages will be submerged by the reservoir of the dam when both phases are complete; another 74 villages will be partly hit.
212	10	30-Jan-02	THE HINDU	H.P. Govt. relaxes building construction norms	In a surprise move, the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet cleared construction of upto five floors for all commercial, hotels, and residential buildings in the state. The Cabinet has clarified its stand, as scarcity of suitable land in the state, along with the compulsion of builders to get their design checked by a structural engineer before any construction. However, the move of lifting ban prior to the forthcoming Shimla Municipal Corporation, has invited widespread criticism on the ground of seismic threats of the region.

213	10	3-Feb-02	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	A way out of the woods	Once recommended for nomination as a world heritage site, is now facing the challenge of recognition as an international biosphere reserve. The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP), one of western Himalayas least-distributed representative eco-system in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh is the home to the endangered western Tragopan, alongwith 300 species of birds, musk deer, the Himalayan tahr and the snow leopard. The studies pointed out how badly the local exploitation of the GHNPs natural resources through herb-collection, grazing, fuel and fodder needs had affected the forests. Surveys show between 3000 and 6000 people and more than 20000 sheep and goats are dependent on the GHNP for their daily sustenance. Though GHNP authorities have stopped issuing permits for herb-collection, officials admit that the practice still continues clandestinely, as does poaching.
214	10	6-Feb-02	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Funds for Dal lake vanish	Rs. 15 crore of the Central grant to clean up the Dal lake has been embezzled by the officials of Lake and Waterways Development Authority (LWDA), according to Vigilance Commissioner of Jammu & Kashmir. Officials in the LWDA, however, blame politicians, who hamper the initiative and prevent the state government from removing the encroachments inside the lake. Following a Public Interest Litigation, the Supreme Court asked the State Government to furnish the details of the funds spent on the development of the Lake.
215	10	13-Feb-02	THE KASHMIR TIMES	J&K to launch Project Hangul	The Jammu & Kashmir government will launch shortly a comprehensive project to preserve Hangul, a rare species of deer mostly found in the mountainous ranges of the Kashmir valley. The project Hangul envisages conducting a census of the species, its habitat management and creating awareness about the threat to the fast-dwindling animal. The multi-disciplinary and a pragmatic approach for preserving hangul and training to manage the animals habitat would be conceptualised properly to achieve long-term gains in increasing the population of hangul, the pride of the valley.

216	10	17-Feb-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	NE forest and related ecosystems under pressure	Remote sensing and geospatial modelling have shown that forest and related ecosystems in North-East India are under severe pressure from biotic and abiotic factors. Jhum cultivation, population pressure, and weak government policies has aggravated the large-scale deforestation in the foothill region of eastern Himalayas. The reduction in forests was more during 1999-2000 than during 1994-1999, and many medicinally and economically important species might be lost during the period contributed to loss in biodiversity in the region.
217	10	20-Feb-02	THE TIMES OF INDIA	HP seeks help to check rodents	Having been able to largely control the outbreak of pneumonic plague in Rohru sub-division of Himachal Pradesh, the state government has sought help from the Centre to tackle plague-causing rodents in its forest areas. Health officials said that the outbreak of the disease was not from filth in the plague-affected area. Instead, the hunters became the carriers of the disease on their return to the village after hunting in the forest. Since the people indulged in poaching in these forests, they were vulnerable to diseases from rodents. The state government had sought short and long term programmes from the National Institute of Communicable Diseases to tackle rodents in the states forests.
218	10	24-Feb-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Measles takes epidemic form in South Tripura	With the onset of the dry spell, measles outbreak in interior Tripura, mainly in South District has reached an alarming situation. According to medical officers, the child deaths are mostly due to broncho-pneumonitis, the post measles syndrome. As the measles turned almost epidemic in several parts of Belonia and Sabrum subdivisions, the State Government has taken steps on a war footing. Medical teams have been sent to affected villages while local public health physicians are working round the clock.

219	10	2-Apr-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Meet on Himalayas for intensive study on quakes	A workshop on Himalayan-Karakoram-Tibet has suggested intensive study of earthquakes and other hazards in the mountain areas to minimize the damage of life and property. Over 100 eminent geoscientists from Japan, Germany, UK, France, Switzerland, Iran, Nepal and India attended the international workshop held at Sikkim recommended as certaining the seismographs of a particular area and its vulnerability, to sinking and sliding before undertaking any construction activity.
220	10	4-Apr-02	THE KASHMIR TIMES	Assembly calls for review of Indus water treaty	Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly called for a complete review of the Indus Water Treaty and sought compensation from the Government of India for the losses the state has been suffering due to this covenant. Participating in a discussion on the treaty for which Mr. M.Y. Tarigami, an MLA from J&K, had moved a short notice motion members as well as the government expressed unanimity in asking the Centre to review the treaty and compensate the State for losses. There was a complete unison among the members of all political parties on the issue.
221	10	8-Apr-02	THE HINDU	Uttaranchal panel to expedite rehabilitation	The Uttaranchal Chief Minister Mr. N.D. Tiwari has constituted a high power Coordination Committee headed by the Irrigation Minister to expedite the construction of the Tehri dam project and rehabilitation of the people who will be displaced by it. Mr. Tiwary has asked the Committee to ensure safety of the life and property of all those who will be affected by the increase in the reservoir waters during the coming monsoons. The problems of the oustees, including 5000 persons still staying in Tehri town should be sorted out amicably and they shifted to suitable places immediately.

222	10	10-Apr-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Rural electrification in NE a distant dream	Even as the country entered 55th year of its independence, rural electrification in the north-east is likely to remain a distant dream for majority of the rural folks, as flow of funds has been drastically cut in the wake of the serious resources crunch faced by the states. The Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertaking in its report has taken a serious note of the lop sided allotment of funds suggesting that Government should examine the phenomenon with adequate seriousness so that the root causes for his poor off-take of funds are identified and suitable measures are taken. The off-tke of funds for the rural electrification programmes is highly unsatisfactory, given the fact that the entire north-east region is completely a rural area with highly inaccessible hilly terrain all over, which requires huge investments in the creation of a power distribution network.
223	10	15-Apr-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Elephant conservation suffers in Meghalaya	Elephant conservation process in the tiny and picturesque hill state of Meghalaya has suffered due to paucity of funds. The human elephant confrontation had further worsened due to practice of Jhum cultivation, which destroys animal habitats forcing them to invade crop fields. In a report of human-elephant conflicts, the openion poll said only 28% of the villagers wanted total removal of elephants from their areas. The Meghalaya Forest Department taken measures for conservation of the wild animals despite of all odds, however, the realization of villagers that the current landuse pattern of slash-and-burn agriculture is not sustainable has made things easy for the conservationists.

224	10	16-Apr-02	THE HINDU	Rare animals, birds facing extinction in N.E.	<p>Unbridled export of animal parts, coupled with slaughter for consumption of meat has brought most of the rare animals and birds to the brink of extinction. The rare brow-antlered deer, locally known as Sangal in Manipur is believed to be less than 70 now in its natural habitat at Keibul Lamjao National Park. Many rare birds are not seen now-a-days on Loktak, the biggest natural lake in the northeast after the commissioning of hydel project. The lake become shallow and heavy siltage, since water is drained away round the clock, and apart from the presence of fisherman, there is further human intrusion such as those who settle on the floating biomass in the lake. A few decades ago, the northeastern states were the proud natural habitates of many exotic and majestic animals and beautiful birds. But, today, they have become almost extince. The migratory birds are on sale near the sanctuaries in Assam while venison and the meat of wild animals are on open sale in Nagaland, many parts of Assam and Manipur without any intervention from the law-enforcing agencies. After the border trade was legalized in 1995, highly enterprising international smugglers of animal parts are in cohort with the powerful poachers for fetching huge money from Myanmar across the international border.</p>
225	10	20-Apr-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Environmentalists worried over NE hydro-electric projects	<p>Several environmental groups and activists have expressed apprehension over the way in which development projects, especially hydro-electric units, are getting clearance in the North East without having the least regards for ecological and biodiversity concerns. The 10th Plan also envisages setting up of 12 hydel projects in the region. The environmentalists feel the projects should be cleared only when they are found to be strictly adhering to the environmental and social norms. Under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) notification of the Environmental Act (EPA), 1986, it is mandatory to evaluate the environmental and social implication of development projects, but most EIA reports tend to suppress information, which may go against the projects concerened, according to Secretary General of Aranyak Nature Club, an NGO based on Assam.</p>

226	10	1-May-02	THE SENTINEL	Drinking water to all in Arunachal by 2007	The Arunachal Pradesh Government is contemplating to provide drinking water to every village of the state by 2007. The projects with capacity of 3.5 and 4 million litres of water per day would be constructed at Roing in Dibang valley district and Pasighat in East Siang district of the state. The projects were underway with Built Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis involving the local villages of the areas, however, some of the villages in the state were remote and inaccessible which hindered the entire process.
227	10	1-May-02	THE KASHMIR TIMES	Shrinking Dal Lake	The issue of conservation of the world famous Dal lake in Kashmir valley along with other water bodies in the state has not been seriously attend to or deliberated upon either by the government or the non-government organization (NGOs). The government plan to save or conserve the water-bodies through creation of J&K Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (JKLWDA) even though crores of rupees have been earmarked for carrying out various conservation works in and around the lakes. Government has made a long claims of acquiring houses in the lake area and restoration by clearing the concrete spaces. But inaction during the past few years has only belied the hopes of the people. Those occupying these houses also feel threatened as they continue to live in the
228	10	2-May-02	THE DAILY EXCELSIOR	Environmental rape in Jammu	Government apathy and public indifference have encouraged the Jammu Administration to ignore all norms of Public Health and safety. No stone is left unturned to appease individuals at the cost of general public. Road side encroachments are on the increases which not only spoil the environment but also prove a hazards to the smooth flow of traffic. The once envisaged Master Plan for Jammu city has been made hay of. The department of social forestry launched a couple or years back with considerable fanfare and did some good job, has been wound up and the rape of entire green belt is going on before the eyes of concerning public.

229	10	28-May-02	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Project Green Earth launched in Haflong	The Assam Police has launched Project Green Earth at Haflong Government College. The plantation of sapling innagurated in a meeting at Haflong attended by Minister HAD, Deputy Commision, North Cachar Hills, Superintendent of Police, Principal of Haflong College, and members of NC Hills Autonomous Council. The Minister appreciated the effots of the Assam Police terming it as the extraordinary scheme and continuous process, and also suggested to grow new variety of bamboos in the NC Hills.
230	10	6-May-02	THE TRIBUNE	Conserving traditional crops	Cultivation of traditional crops by farmers in Uttaranchal has been encouraged under a programme being conducted by the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR). The programme launched by the bureau under the National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP) on household food and nutritional security, is being conducted under the overall supervision of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The director of HESCO, a Dehradun based voluntary organization participated in the mission for conservation and propagation of tradition crops, said even though the farmers in the hills traditionally cultivated foodgrains and pulses, their real commercial values was not known to them. However, they demonstrated the importance of these crops by cultivating their improved varieties in various districts in the hills, by actively involoving the farmers at every stage.
231	10	30-May-02	THE KASHMIR TIMES	J & K launches massive live-stock upgradation programme	For increasing he poduction of the major livestock production of major livestock products, the Animal Husbandry Department in Kashmir valley has adopted various scientific and technological practices. Presently the animal husbandry sector contributes 13% of the states Gross Domestic Product. It has taken up several measures for improving the indigenous livestock, besides providing preventive health cover and treatment facilites to the growing livestock population.

238	10	7-Aug-02	THE SENTINEL	Commercial fishing posing threat to Arunachal ecology	Rampant commercial fishing by using chemical poisons and electric shocks is posing a threat to the fragile ecology of Arunachal Pradesh. In a workshop organized by Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary division and Doimukh Gaon Buras (village chiefs), the Environment and Forest Minister of the State said that the villagers should be alert to the threat posed to the ecology by such fishing activities and instead avail the benefits of various eco-development and forestry schemes for their economic uplift.
239	10	7-Aug-02	THE SENTINEL	UNICEFs rain water scheme for Nagaland	To cope with the water crisis in Nagaland, the Public Health Engineering (PHE) department has taken up a three phase model community based rooftop rain water harvesting scheme in collaboration with the UNICEF. The Government of Nagaland proposed the project and the beneficiaries were families living below poverty line.
240	10	8-Aug-02	THE INDIAN EXPRESS	First hydram installed in Una district	Under the draught prone area project (DPAP), the watershed development committee at Apramb village in Amb block of Una district, Himachal Pradesh has made a landmark achievement by installing the first ever hydrolic ram (hydram) for irrigation without using any energy of fuel. Hydram is an impulse device which uses the energy caused by the momentum of falling water to raise it to an elevation up to 25 to 30 times by using a combination of valves that produce hammering effect on the water trapped in the device. The government had received demand from many other districts to install hydram system so that the water shortage could be removed.

241	10	8-Aug-02	HINDUSTAN TIMES	Fungus is goldmine for the hill people	<p>Morchella esculenta, a fungus growing naturally on the humus rich floors on the central and western Himalayas at an altitude of 1800 to 3600 m is sold by the local inhabitants to middlemen in rates as high as Rs 5000 per kg, and they pass it on to star hotels and pharmaceutical companies earning a profit of 35-40%. The fungus, with a unique flavour is cooked as food and is used in medicinal and health care system by the traditional hill societies, who also consider it important for clinical use as well as rich nutritional value. Drs Maikhuri and Rao of the G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development along with their team of researchers have recently carried out an extensive field study with regard to the collection of Morchella in the 40 villages of Niti valley in the higher Himalayas. They stressed on the need for scientific evaluation of ecological and economic implications of such traditional practices as no efforts have so far been made to cultivate Morchella.</p>
242	10	11-Aug-02	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Siachen may soon be worlds largest dump	<p>Siachen, means place of roses, the worlds coldest and highest battlefield could soon be one of the worlds biggest dump. Army sources reveal that during 1998 alone, the Indian side was bombarded with 43,000 artillery shells and 2,30,000 rounds of small arms fire from the Pakistani side. Post-Kargil, the conflict intensified and one thousand strong infantry battalion is currently stationed on the northern, central and southern parts of the glacier, where natural disintegration is impossible as temperatures falls nearly 60o celsius during winter. Army officers however, claim that they are using incinerators run on kerosene to destroy their waste, but they admit that a lot of the stuff cannot be disposed.</p>

243	10	27-Aug-02	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Glaciers in HP hit by decreasing snowfall	The adverse impact of global warming is slowly but surely being felt in the mountain state of Himachal Pradesh. The snow line of glaciers has gradually moved up by as much as two or three km at various places in the higher reaches, causing concern to environmentalist and authorities. The balley tree, a variety of the willow, which enters to the fuel, fodder and fibre needs of the triblals when the valley is blocked for over six months in the winters, is also falling prey to insects and parasites. Scientists of Himalayan Forest Research Institute also admit the attack of aphids on the trees.
244	10	1-Sep-02	THE HINDU	HC seeks reports on preservation of Dal lake	The Jammu and Kashmir High Court (HC) has directed different departments of the government to give a detailed report on the measures being taken for the preservation of Dal lake. A division bench of the HC directed the divisional authorities to submit details of the unauthorized construction in the green belt forest area around the water body. However, the Lake and Waterways Development Authority, Srinagar regarding encroachments of the world famous lake have produced nothing before the court.
245	10	2-Sep-02	THE HINDUSTAN TIMES	Leh: worlds highest zero waste town	Ladakh Ecological Development Group launched the alliance for a zero waste Leh by participating of poorest communities, tour and travel guides, environmental and womens group, and health specialists. There is almost no plastic bag available after a ban demanded by citizens, came into place a few years ago and organic waste is collected and fed to the cattle, which almost every prosperous family owns. So maybe, given its attitude, Leh could well become the highest zero waste town in the world.

246	10	5-Sep-02	THE SENTINEL	Hundreds of HIV-infected people, in NE dying for lack of medicines	Hundreds of HIV-infected people have died in the north-eastern region because of the lack of access to medicines and inadequate healthcare facilities. According to various estimates, there could be up to 100,000 HIV-positive patients in the seven north eastern states, with more than 200,000 injecting drug users in the region. Manipur borders the heroin-producing Golden Triangle of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand and has high rates of intravenous drug use a key cause of HIV infection in the region. Anti-retroviral drugs required for treatment of HIV-AIDS are either not immediately available or in most cases unaffordable due to its high costs, according to President of Manipur Network of Positive People (MNPP).
247	10	23-Sep-02	THE BUSINESS LINE	Special funds for hill area diverted: Report	The Special Central Assistance plan, under the Hill Area Development Programme, forms a sub-component of the States plan. As a result, other sectors or areas received priority while environmental concerns did not receive adequate attention and the funds meant for ecological preservation of hill area was used for non-plan or salary requirements, the report prepared by Ministry of Environment and Forests has said. The report said that the special assistance, meant for the ecological preservation of the hill areas, was used for the other purposes even as the rich environmental heritage of the Himalayan region was under severe pressure from natural as well as human-induced stresses. The report stressed the need to provide incentives to farmers of conserving the gene pool through promotion of traditional farming practices. To protect the fragile ecosystem of the Himalayas, the Central Government had also proposed certain restrictions which, if implemented may have a far-reaching impact.

248	10	23-Sep-02	THE TRIBUNE	Mining, construction change weather pattern?	<p>The Union Government, in its latest report released in August, stated that global warming caused by increasing pollution and environment imbalances are some of the factors responsible for the sudden change in weather and failure of the monsoon. Continuous drought and failure of the monsoon in Himachal Pradesh has resulted in a loss of over Rs. 20 crore to the state. Apples, potatoes and off-season vegetable crops, which play a significant role in the economy of the state, are the worst affected. Scientists say that the main reason for sudden change in the rain pattern is attributed to the large-scale unscientific mining combined with the setting up of big power an cement plants, roads and buildings. Illegal mining and quarrying has been going on unchecked for several years, which, further contributed to the environmental imbalance. A study conducted by an NGO regarding environmental imbalance revealed that over 5,000 hectares of land had been seriously affected by mining and construction activities. The report, based on this study, says large scale destruction of the states forests by mining has resulted in severe drought and flash floods and the worst affected districts are Kinnaur, Solan, Shimla, and Bilaspur, which fall in the catchments areas of the Sutlej river of the state.</p>
249	11	2-Mar-03	THE WEEK	Murky deals	<p>The Rs. 500-crore Save Dal Project, which the National Conference government devised together with the Centre in 1997 for the revival and conservation of Dal lake, has beneficiaries. But the once picturesque lake of Kashmir, which attracted tourists from around the world, continues to perish. Vigilance probes found that officials at the Jammu and Kashmir Lakes and Waterways Development Authority, which was set up to implement the project, had manipulated records to the tune of Rs. 15 crore. Now, Centre has washed its hands of the project and saving the lake is no longer top priority of cash-strapped state.</p>

250	11	8-Mar-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Govt. finds 600 illegal buildings around Dal	Jammu & Kashmir Urban Housing Development Minister said the government had identified around 600 illegal constructions in the vicinity of Dal lake. Among the buildings, are official residences of former chief minister of the state, director general of police, houses of former legislators, VIP huts and hotels. Sources said many heads are going to roll as large number of constructions by influential people in the lakes forbidden area have been done with permission from the concerned authorities. However, the government is making a comprehensive plan of action to be taken against all the illegal constructions, according to the Minister.
251	11	9-Mar-03	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Sikkim forest cover up 6.75 pc	There was a net increase of 479 km ² in forest cover till 1997, which amounted to 6.75% of total area of the state. According to state forest report, over 44% of total geographical area of Sikkim accounted for forest cover. The target afforestation in the reported year under 20-point programme was 11,000 hectares of which the department achieved over 11,106 hectares by plantation including 300 hectares which have been converted under non-timber forest product and medicinal plants.
252	11	18-Mar-03	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	New technology developed for jhum cultivation	Shifting cultivation, popularly know as jhum, is one of the best agricultural practices of the world, admitted Arup Rai, soil conservationist of North Cachar Hills. He developed a new scientific technology named Modified Scientific Shifting Cultivation Technology (MOSS-CULT), taking the idea from Sloping Area Land Technology (SALT) and Mizoram New Method of Cultivation (MNMC), which requires to fill up the affected area with nutrients by fixing the atmosphere nitrogen into soil and to restore the equilibrium of the soil with a provision of natural forest cover on the ridgeline of the watershed areas. He is in favor of continuing the jhum cultivation; the traditional heritage of the ethnic groups in the hills and requested the jhumias to do it scientifically.
253	11	18-Mar-03	ASIAN AGE	Rare bird reappears in Himachal after a gap of 25 years	A rare migratory Eurasian bird has been spotted for the first time in the Pong, one of the largest man-made wetlands in Himachal Pradesh. Pong wetland in the picturesque Kangra valley has seen a rise in the arrival of migratory birds every winter and the graylag goose has arrived in the wetland, some 25 years after it was built. The number of migratory birds touched the figure 1,15,201 this year, according to Conservator of forests and wildlife circle.

254	11	31-Mar-03	KASHMIR TIMES	Sub-standard fertilizers affecting fruit, vegetable growth in valley	Notwithstanding the good spell of rains and snowfall, the growth of fruit and vegetable market in the Kashmir valley has suffered as setback due to the supply of sub-standard chemical fertilizers, according to vice president of Jammu & Kashmir Fruits and Vegetable Growers and Dealers Association. Though the state is dependent on horticulture, but the fruit growers problems are not being taken up seriously by the government, as a result of which quality and yield of the fruit is going down day by day.
255	11	4-May-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Shimla Corporation Plant: threatening ecology more than managing waste	The waste management plant set up by Municipal Corporation is violating environment protection laws. Non-biodegradable waste is being dumped in the forest areas along the roadside without obtaining permission from the concerned authorities. The non-composted garbage has become an environment hazard in the area. The strong stench emanating from the heaps of untreated garbage has made it difficult for the public residing in the vicinity of the composting pant situated at Darni Ka Bagicha.
256	11	5-May-03	THE TRIBUNE	Govt to focus on ecological security	The Himachal Pradesh Government has decided to shift the focus from commercial forestry to ecological security and sustainable livelihood. The main objective of the Rs. 60 crore reform project is to make basic changes in the existing forest policy, which has led to unsustainable and inequitable exploitation of forest resources, to facilitate sustainable improvement in the livelihood of the poor forest dependent people. The functions of the forest department will be redefined accordingly and it will be restructured to achieve the goals set under the reforms programme. The reforms will also take care of legislative changes required to remove the constraints to private forestry, unhelpful land use policies and inequitable distribution of rights

257	11	5-May-03	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Manipuri ponies facing extinction	The indigenous Manipuri pony, though small in size, is known for its swiftness, sturdiness and tolerance in the game of polo, is on the verge of extinction from the birthplace of the game (polo). Efforts to develop and preserve the local breed of ponies at Regional Pony Development Farm at Tingkai Khunou in Bishnupur district of Manipur suffered a fatal fate. The farm was set up by North Eastern Council (NEC) in 1988, and was taken over by the state government in 1992, with the aim of breeding the original local pony breed and developing them. But they are on the verge of extinction due to abundant fodder and lack of nutritious food.
258	11	12-May-03	THE TRIBUNE	Forest cover under threat	The large-scale outbreak of forest diseases in the hills of Himachal Pradesh is causing concern to the environmentalists, who fear that the process, if not checked, could spell doom for the fast depleting forest resources which are already under strain due to increasing pressure of population. The Himalayan Research Group, an NGO engaged in forestry research, warns that Himalayan forests would be subjected to increased onslaughts of disease causing organisms in future. The forest department must come out with a comprehensive plan to tackle the situation, but they do not have the necessary infrastructure to detect and manage such diseases.
259	11	17-May-03	SAHARA TIMES	Shrinking ice	Glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than in any other part of the world and, if the present rate continues, the likelihood of them disappearing by the year 2035 is very high, according to a study of Asian glaciers by the International Commission for Snow and Ice (ICSI). In the case of Gangotri glacier, reconstruction studies show that the glacier has shrunk from 70km in its prime to its present length of 26km. Recession rates have varied over the years from 10 to 11 meter per year, with a sharp rise in late seventies, up to 25 meter per year in 1994 and 1998, and the similar phenomena has been the recorded with other glaciers in the Himalayas.

260	11	20-May-03	BUSINESS STANDARD	Uttaranchal offers Rs 80,000 subsidy on electric van	The Uttaranchal government is offering a subsidy of Rs 80,000 on the sale of each Bijlee vehicle, a zero emission electric transit van being manufactured by automobile major Mahindra and Mahindra. The government decision to offer subsidy is aimed at replacing Vikrams, which are the key mode of transport in the state capital and are causing pollution. Initially, this subsidy is being offered to only those customers, who hold Vikram licenses in Dehradun, the state capital.
261	11	25-May-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Master plan in the offing to develop Pong wetland	The Himachal Pradesh state government will soon put together a master plan in develop the Pong wetland of Kangra district ecologically declared as an international wetland recently. Forest Minister said that a task force consisting of officers of the concerned departments had been set up to prepare an approach paper and a blue print project in this regard. A body to be christened as Pong Wetland Society would be formed to raise funds for the project and various NGOs, eminent persons, institutions would be the members of the society, according to the minister.
262	11	26-May-03	THE SENTINEL	5,000 hit by fluoride poisoning in 15 Karbi Anglong villages	Thousands of villagers have been affected, many of them crippled for life, by drinking water containing excessive levels of fluorides in some parts of Karbi Anglong districts of Assam. The worst affected area was the Takelanguin, where more than 600 people out of the 2,300 surveyed were affected by the hydro-fluorosis, according to Chief Engineer of Public Health Department. While scientists had claimed that the northeastern region was safe from fluoride, it was detected for the first time in the middle of last year in Takelanguin area in Karbi Anglong district, where several cases of both dental and skeletal fluorosis were initially found. The fluoride content in water in the area varies from 5 to 23mg per litre, while permissible limit is 1.2mg per litre. The district council authorities have been identified tube wells with high fluoride content and launched a scheme for supply of fluoride-free water.

263	11	29-May-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Kufri to house snow leopards, Tibetan wolves	Apart from the natural salubrious surroundings dotted with mighty deodars and rhododendrons, the famous Kufri hill resort, will provide added attraction to the tourists in the form of snow leopards and Tibetan wolves that will be kept in the Himalayan National Park (HNP), situated 15 km from Shimla. The Central Zoo Authority has given permission in principle to keep pair each of snow leopards and Tibetan wolves at HNP, which would be brought from the Darjeeling Zoo under exchange programme.
264	11	1-Jun-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Beas may change course to stretch Kullu runway	The Centres ambitious plan to expand the Bhuntar airport in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh is sure to raise the hackles of environmentalists, because expansion work assigned to the Airport Authority of India (AAI), can not be undertaken without diverting the course of the Beas river. The AAI, on its part put the ball in the Himachal Governments court, saying they were willing to undertake runway expansion provided the State government gave them the reclaimed land after diversion of Beas free of costs and free from all other encumbrances. But the Centre has now made it clear that its for AAI to do the job.
265	11	8-Jun-03	GARHWAL POST	Herbs can help make Uttaranchal a leading state	The time has now come again to begin research on herbs in a modern and scientific manner, and call for preventing the over-exploitation of herbs from forests and promoting their cultivation in Uttaranchal has been raise. Gopeshwar based Herbal Research Institute, whose development had been stifled by politicians and bureaucrats, strongly advocated for development by the Government. Herbs have the potential to generate huge employment opportunities and can help to prevent migration form the hills. With appropriate knowledge inputs and government support in this regard, may change in the economy of the State.

266	11	10-Jun-03	ASIAN AGE	Tripura tortoises face extinction	<p>The large number of tortoises, which attracted tourists and pilgrims for last three centuries in the Kalyan Sagar lake, adjacent to the historic Tripuraswari temple, Udaipur in South Tripura is playing a heavy price for modernization, as the wall constructed in the four sides of the lake is depriving the tortoises of a natural habitation. The extent of natural habitat for the tortoises has been minimized drastically and they are not finding any space for taking rest and for laying eggs. The report submitted by the Tripura State Pollution Control Board team said all the tortoises, one of the rarest species in India, may get extinct shortly if immediate action is not taken.</p>
267	11	11-Jun-03	THE STATESMAN	Sikkim lakes flood-prone due to global warming	<p>Fourteen lakes in north Sikkim, formed and engorged by melting glaciers, may be prone to flood, and this is only the tip of the iceberg, an inventory warns by Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). The Mountain Environment and Natural Resources Information Systems (MENRIS) of ICIMOD has started a project from June 1999 to develop an inventory of glaciers, glacial lakes and floods related with glacier lakes in the Hindukush-Himalayan mountain region. The glaciers area natures renewable store-house of freshwater, but accelerated global warming is causing them to retreat, resulting long-term loss of natural freshwater storage could have devastating downstream effects. The survey tries to cover the mountainous region of 3,500km from Afghanistan to Myanmar, sustaining over 150 million people. The countries in between are Pakistan, Nepal, China, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and India.</p>

268	11	20-Jun-03	THE PIONEER	Kalam ignites herbal revolution in N-E	Northeast is a storehouse of medicinal plants and exotic herbs, as well as practitioners of ancient herbal lore, according to the President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, during his visit to the Northeast. For the last five decades the traditional Khasi and Garo chiefs of Meghalaya have been fighting for the constitutional recognition of their rights and customary practices, which they claim have substantially been usurped by the State and district councils. The President told the visiting MPs from the region that the global market for the herbal medicine was a whopping \$60 billion, and therefore, he suggested that India should go herbal for enormous economic benefits and also provide health care for the poor.
269	11	21-Jun-03	SAHARA TIMES	Manipur has most HIV cases per million	According to 2002-2003 Status Report of the National AIDS Control Programme, Manipur accounts for nearly 8% of Indias total HIV-positive cases, whereas the state contributes just 0.02% of Countrys total population. This puts the state third in the list of states with highest number or reported cases, behind Maharashtra and Tamil Nandu. The rate of infections per million populations in Manipur is 6 times higher as compared to Maharashtra and 20 times higher than in Tamil Nandu. This is the alarmingly highest rate not only in the country but also in the world.
270	11	22-Jun-03	THE HINDU	Parasitic plant threatens Valley of Flowers	G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) warned that the rich floral wealth of the Valley of Flower National Park at Garhwal Himalayas is facing a new threat proliferation of Dodder, a parasitic plant. According to the scientists of GBPIHED, the plant, which coils around stems of the host plants and thrives on the nutrition, it drains from them, has been found on different species of medicinal and flowering plants across the valley in patches. Surveys by scientists have shown that infestation by Dodder adversely affected the size and density of the host plants, especially those that showed low density. The Indiras Hand, a critically endangered species, which is used in several indigenous systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Unani and Tibetan systems, found to be heavily infested by the parasite.

271	11	26-Jun-03	BUSINESS LINE	Uttaranchal plans disaster management for all districts	The Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre (DMMC) here is preparing district disaster management action plans for all 13 districts of Uttaranchal. Set up in October 2001, the DMMC had so far developed 12 training modules, 192 village disaster management action plans (VDMAPs) for the most vulnerable villages in the Himalayas. A detailed database for the entire hill state based on geographical information system (GIS) and remote-sensing techniques is being prepared by the DMMC.
284	11	17-Oct-03	THE SENTINEL	New gas reserve in Tripura to help power projects	A new gas reserve has been found by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in Khedabari village of West Tripura district heralding a new era for sustained supply of gas to several power projects including proposed 500 MW gas based power project at Monarchak and for other commercial purpose in the State. ONGC officials observe that nature of gas available in the State is of high quality containing 97% of Methane and the reserve is presumed to be of 40,000 crore cubic metre. At present with the modernized techniques and available infrastructure 40 lakh cubic metre gas is explored out of which 13 lakh cubic metre gas is used for generation of electricity.
285	11	25-Oct-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	HP best in reproductive health: PFI	Himachal Pradesh has been adjudged the best performing state by the Population Foundation India (PFI) in the field of reproductive health and family planning based on its achievements in term of decline in infant mortality and fertility rates and improvement in female literacy and school enrollment. Lahaul-Spiti is one of the three districts which have been selected as the best performing district on reproductive and children health programmes in the country.

286	11	4-Jul-03	THE STATESMAN	Rehab panel for old Tehri residents	The Uttaranchal state government has constituted a sub committee which will rehabilitate 75 families still living in old Tehri under adverse conditions. In spite of officials claiming earlier that the people ousted from the Tehri area have been completely rehabilitated, many continue to live in the town. Either these people have not been adequately compensated or their compensations have not been cleared. The government has asked Tehri Hydro Development Corporation (THDC) to complete their work by the end of the year, however, the work can only be completed after the town is evacuated.
287	11	4-Jul-03	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Shillong identified as eco-city	Meghalaya state capital and the biggest hill station in the country Shillong has been identified as one of the cities in the country under Eco-city scheme of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) under Union Ministry of Environment and Forests. According to the state urban affairs minister, Shillong city will now be eligible for Central assistance in the form of 50% grant on cost of projects approved under the scheme for the environmental improvement of the city. A waste treatment plant set up a cost of Rs. 4.62 crore was already functioning in the city and two more schemes likely to get the green signal from CPCB.
288	11	6-Jul-03	THE HINDU	Tourism hits Ladakh ecosystem	The opening up of the high altitude wetlands in the Changthang region of Ladakh for tourism is disturbing its extremely fragile ecosystem. Modernisation, development and sudden increase in tourism is breaking down the traditional management systems, affecting local culture and communities. Tourist activities are causing disturbance to the wildlife, degrading the pastures and adding to the pollution. According to a report by WWF-India, increasing activities of government agencies and development works are some other potential threats. The WWF-India is now trying to motivate the security forces, deployed in Ladakh, to retrain from conducting shooting exercises near the lake besides involving the Indo-Tibetan Border personnel in cleanliness campaigns.

289	11	7-Jul-03	THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Rs 30 crore plan for Jhelum catchments	The Jammu and Kashmir government has formulated a comprehensive Rs 30 crore five-year plan for restoration of the degraded catchments area in the northern basin on the Jhelum river. The minister for forests and environment said that depleting water sources, silting-cum sedimentation of water bodies, dwindling forest cover and the resultant climate changes necessitated treatment of the Jhelum basin.
290	11	10-Jul-03	THE SENTINEL	Rare white sambhar spotted in Mizoram	Forest department officials have spotted a rare species of white sambhar, believed to have become extinct in the Kolasib forest division of the state. According to the forest department, these animals were found nowhere else in the world and was believed to have become extinct in Mizoram due to excessive poaching and clearing of forest area. The state forest department had informed the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, and wildlife experts were soon expected to undertake a detailed study of the matter.
291	11	17-Jul-03	THE ASIAN AGE	Geologists predict doom for Darjeeling in 75 yrs	Geologists examining frequent landslides in West Bengal's Darjeeling hills fear that in about 75 years the vagaries of nature could destroy most of this popular summer gateway. The forecast, made by GSI in a report, came as a rude blow to the state government, coming as it did after 24 people were killed by landslides in the region this month.
292	11	17-Jul-03	THE SENTINEL	Kohima identified as earthquake-prone zone	Scientists have identified Nagalands capital Kohima as one of the top twenty earthquake-vulnerable zones in the country. Seminars would be conducted through NGOs and school children in all earthquake prone cities of the country to educate them on the dangers and also prepare them for any eventuality. Sources also lamented that in the capital town constructions do not follow prescribed norms and almost all the buildings constructed have the risk of collapsing.

293	11	21-Jul-03	THE ASIAN AGE	Arunachal objects to ban on hydel power project	The Arunachal Pradesh government has raised serious objections against the environment and forest ministry for ignoring the detailed report of Subansiri power project, the countrys largest hydel power project, in the state. Expressing surprise over the unilateral decision of the ministry, the state government spokesman expressed that it would have serious repercussion among the peole in frontier state. The project could earn Rs 1,000 crores annually by harvesting its hydel power potential that is lying unused since independence.
294	11	24-Jul-03	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Meghalaya to go slow on uranium mining	Meghalaya Government has decided to go slow on the issue of giving the green signal to the Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) to mine the highly radio-active uranium ore discovered in West Khasi Hills district. Keeping in view the opposition from various quarters to mining of uranium, the meeting opted for deeper and more careful study before taking any decision. The matter was referred to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs to consider while the Mining and Geology Department was entrusted to elicit the opinion of a cross-section of the people.
295	11	27-Jul-03	THE STATESMAN	Uttaranchal pact with Canadian firm for hydro-electricity project	A protocol of intent for steady technological improvements in the power sector in Uttaranchal has been signed between the state government and Canadian Commercial Corporation, a crown corporation company of the Government of Canada. The protocol provides for a project to develop the Bhairon Ghati Stage II hydro-electricity project with 240 MW capacity and to upgrade and extend on of the ongoing generation projects, namely, the Chilla Project.

296	11	6-Aug-03	THE TRIBUNE	Hamirpur tops HIV list	There are about 533 HIV infected and 144 full-blown AIDS cases in the state of Himachal Pradesh. Hamirpur district tops the list with 125 HIV-infected and 39 full-blown AIDS cases while Lahaul and Spiti has not recorded any HIV-infected or full-blown AIDS cases. The National AIDS Control Policy is planning to bring HIV-infected cases to zero by 2007. Voluntary counseling and testing centres have been set up and tele-counseling centres have also been set up at Mandi and Dharamshala.
297	11	8-Aug-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Fruit bowl shrinks in Himachal	Solan, the fruit bowl of Himachal, may soon fall empty. The signs are ominous. The area under fruit cultivation has fallen from 12,000 hectares six years ago to 6,400 this year. With no market intervention scheme to bank on, and the prices plummeting to as low as 50 paise a kg, helpless farmers are threatening to dump the native pears and plums for more lucrative vegetables and mangoes. Farmers have given their verdict: if the government does not take some corrective steps, the Solan belt will turn its back on fruits forever, it is farewell to fruits.
298	11	11-Aug-03	THE STATESMAN	Mufti launches projects to restore Wullar	The state government of Jammu & Kashmir has launched a Rs 179-crore project to restore Wullar, largest freshwater lake in Asia, situated about 35 km from Srinagar. The project envisages protection of the water body, frame a flood control policy and ensure a proper sewerage. The chief minister Mr. Mufti Mohammed Sayeed said efforts should be made to arrange foreign funding for the project. He emphasized that people of adjoining areas should be made aware of project and their participation sought for the implementation.

299	11	19-Aug-03	BUSINESS STANDARD	NTPC to invest Rs 6,000 cr in Uttaranchal project	The National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) would invest Rs 6,000 crore in its three new hydro-electric projects in Uttaranchal. The chief minister of the state expressed that the Memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Uttaranchal government and NTPC Hydro Ltd, was part of his dream to establish Uttaranchal as power state so as to meet the growing power requirement. The proposed projects are 108 MW Lata-Topovan in Chamoli district, 520 MW Loharinag Pala in Uttarkashi district and 360 MW Tapovan-Vishnugad hydro power project in the Joshimath area of Chamoli district.
300	11	14-Aug-03	THE TRIBUNE	Pests kill Lahaul valley willows	Vast stretches of willow forests in the Lahaul valley of Himachal Pradesh are drying up as the trees planted more than a century ago are being destroyed by pests and the damage may be irreversible. The willow trees started degeneration rapidly five years ago and since then the experts have been stressing the need to plant fresh stock to keep the willow forest alive. According to the research carried out by Himalayan Forest Research Institute, in the past decade the willows had started drying up and more than 3,000 salix trees have already dried up in the valley due to various pests. The massive attack of aphids was the main cause of drying up of willows but global warming had increased their resistance to diseases and pest attacks. Other causes are the monoculture practiced by the locals for planting willows, very old planting stock, decrease in water flow, wrong planting sites, improper silviculture techniques, melting of glaciers and decrease in snowfall.
301	11	31-Aug-03	THE STATESMAN	Splash of funds for Dehra lakes	The Centre has sanctioned Rs 137 crore to maintain and beautify 25 lakes under the National Lake Conservation Plan. Over Rs 40 lakh has been allotted to maintain Nainital lake and making it free of pollution. According to Union minister for environment and forests, the Ganga Action Plan under NRCP has been extended to 11 towns of Uttaranchal. The state chief minister has said a Himalayan authority should be formed to conserve the Himalayan forestry and ecology and the progress of various ongoing programmes are being assessed.

302	11	1-Sep-03	THE SENTINEL	Centre urged to review Mining Ministrys stand over Nagas rights	Nagaland Government has taken strong exception to the stand of the Union Ministry of Coal and Mines regarding Naga peoples right over ownership of land and its resources. The State Government has urged the Union Government to review the Action Taken Report (ATR) of the Ministry on Sarkaria Commissions recommendation on Centre-State relationship with special reference to Nagaland. The Chief Minister appealed to the Inter-State Council not to accept the ATR of the Ministry of Coal and Mines and review afresh the whole issue.
303	11	3-Sep-04	THE TRIBUNE	Rs 15.71 crore for afforestation	Himachal will spend Rs 15.71 crore on afforestation during the current financial year and an area of 15,000 hectares will be brought under trees. According to Himachal Pradesh forest minister, 20,600 km2 area of the state was covered with forests which is much less than the norms laid down in the National Forest Policy, 66% area of Himachal should be under forest, and every effort was being made to achieve this target. Despite a heavy demand for fire wood and timber, the state forest cover had increased by 1,859 km2. An integrated afforestation and eco-development programme had been initiated by Forest Development Agency, Dharamsala through which participatory approach will be ensured in the working of this programme and residents of each village will be involved in micro planning.
304	11	15-Sep-03	THE HINDU	Tibetan antelope population increasing	Several species of wildlife on the Tibetan plateau have shown an increase in the number over the past decade. This includes the most south-after but severely threatened Tibetan Antelope or Chiru, whose wool is used to make the exotic shahtoosh. The study had been sponsored by the New York based Wildlife Conservation Society revealed that the increase in number of population of wild yak, wild ass or kiang, Tibetan gazelles along with Chiru antelopes. Illegal hunting of Tibetan antelopes and other wildlife species in the Chang Tang region of Tibetan plateau that had brought them to the brink of extinction about a decade ago. Among these, the most vulnerable was the Tibetan antelope, which yield the finest wool in the world which was smuggled into Kashmir for weaving into shahtoosh. Shahtoosh, now banned globally, is sold as mus as 15,000 dollars per shawl.

305	11	17-Sep-03	THE SENTINEL	Tribals demand political rights to govern themselves	The Northeast Tribal Convention (NTC) has demanded that tribals be allowed the political rights to govern themselves and decide their own destiny without any delay or dilution. The convention organized by the North East Zonal Coordination Committee at Dimapur, demanded urgent recognition of constitutional expression to the demands of tribals to their longstanding aspiration. While observing the endless saga of human suffering in the socio-economic and cultural and psychological terms wherein tribals were subjected to systematic harassment and displacement from their homeland in the name of development projects.
306	11	23-Sep-03	INDIAN EXPRESS	Almost half of HP in grip of typhus	With cases of mystery fever having been reported in atleast five major districts of the state, almost half of Himachal Pradesh has fallen in the grip of the deadly disease, which has claimed 18 lives so far. While the Kasauli based Central Research Institute has confirmed its Rickettsia, the Central Institute of Communicable Diseases has finally proclaimed the case of typhus which is aggravated from Rickettsia. Besides Shimla, the worst affected districts are Bilaspur, Solan, Hamirpur and Sirmaur.
307	11	28-Sep-03	GARHWAL POST	Landslides threaten Uttarkashi existence	Varunvat, the hill mountain that overlooks the historic city of Uttarkashi in Uttaranchal has become the source of major slides that have already caused damage to public property worth crores of rupees. Hundreds of people have been rendered homeless, while others are having to be evacuated from areas that are increasingly under threat. Local residents fear that the slide could ring the death knell of a city that is as old as the Puranas. Stabilisation of the slopes and reconstruction could involve expenditure running into many crores of rupees.

308	11	27-Sep-03	THE SENTINEL	Mysterious bird phenomenon returns to Jatinga	The mysterious Jatinga phenomenon returned to haunt mankind and science as hundreds of birds got sucked to the ground at the Barail range while dozens of enthusiasts kept a vigil till birds fled away at the first ray of sunlight in the morning. The Jatinga, famous for the phenomenon of birds committing suicide, is located on a spur of the Halflong ridge, the head-quarters of North Cachar Hills district of Assam. Here, the mist and fog throw a veil around the beautiful face of the damsel from September to November, during these late monsoon months, mysterious behaviour of birds takes place. Renowned ornithologists have carried out researches on this topic, however, no single hypothesis comprehensively explains the Jatinga mystery till date.
309	11	29-Oct-03	THE SENTINEL	Mysterious disease claims 60 in Arunachal	An unidentified disease has claimed 60 lives in Lazu circle in Arunachal Pradesh Tirap district during past couple of months. Doctors suspect measles might be the cause, sources said, most of the victims were children. The most affected areas in the remote parts of specially Lazu, Longling, Syniu and Upper and Lower Kolan of the district. A district medical team including doctors, para-medics and nursing staff from the district medical hospital had rushed to the affected areas to control the disease.
313	12	Jan-04	Wastelands News	Woman in Panchayats	The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly has passed a Bill reserving 33% seats for women in panchayats in the state, by replacing the existing provision relating to nomination. The existing Act, which had a provision for nomination of the scheduled castes and the scheduled classes was also amended. The powers have to be devolved to the lowest tiers and women have also to be empowered. It is a matter of pride that the Jammu & Kashmir government has taken a lead in adopting Gandhian road map for grassroots empowerment.

314	12	Apr-04	Sanctuary Asia	In search of a mountain peacock	The author treked high into the high altitude Dafla mountain of western Arunachal Pradesh near Indo-China border, where he tracked down the mysterious white-tailed monal. Though the distributions of Himalayan monal and sclaters monals have been recorded in the Himalayan region, but white-tailed monal, a species is new to science. Hence, the entire region needs to be surveyed to assess the diversity of plants and animal life. There are some of the wildest and most remote habitats left in India, home to a diversity of wildlife and ancient tribal cultures that have changed little over the centuries. Both need to be studied and protected before they are lost forever.
315	12	Jan-04	Wastelands News	Ecocity on Corbett Parks periphery	The Uttaranchal government has embarked upon an ambitious project of developing an ecocity at the periphery of the Jim Corbett National Park, the first phase of which is likely to be completed within a couple of years. Christened Corbett Country, the new tourist destination will have all the features to attract wildlife enthusiasts and nature lovers. To be spread in sprawling 802 acres of land just behind the Corbett park, will have 85% lush green area resembling the national parks surroundings while the rest of the land space will be used for developing water bodies, spas and health resorts.
316	12	Apr-04	Wasteland News	Boost to bamboo in Uttaranchal	The Uttaranchal bamboo and fibre development board has got trade inquiries from South American, African and Asian nations for importing bamboo and its products to their countries in the recently concluded World Bamboo Expo 2004. The Uttaranchal government has initiated bamboo plantation on a large area and was also associating with village community in promoting bamboo products. The government initiative to develop 80,000 ha of bamboo plantation and also involve over 8,000 families in the field of production substantially leading to better economic prospects, clearly highlights the inherent potential in Uttaranchal to become a major bamboo exporting state. The board is also promoting centres of excellence across the state for improving quality of bamboo products as well as to enhance production capacity. The forest department has also developed major nurseries in 250 of its ranges where high yielding bamboo is being developed, and its saplings are given free of cost to farmers in order to give a boost to bamboo plantation.

317	12	Apr-04	Wastelands News	Himachal for new forest policy	The Himachal Pradesh government is contemplating formulation of a new forest policy with a view to conserve the states forests wealth. To achieve the goal set in the national and state forest policy, the department has been raising plantations over 25 to 30 thousand ha annually. Apart from afforestation, soil conservation works in the plantation area are also being carried out. Catchments area treatment (CAT) plan has also been prepared after detailed survey. Mainly afforestation, pasture development, soil conservation and engineering works are undertaken through CAT plans. The state has earned the distinction of achieving an increase of a remarkable 859 km ² as has been authenticated in the State of Forest Report, 2001 of FSI, which is accounted of about 3.5% of the total geographical area of the state.
340	12	19-Jul-04	THE HINDU	Number of leopards goes up in Himachal	The leopard population in Himachal Pradesh has registered an almost 20% increase with their number going up from 650 to 783, according to the latest census of the wildlife department. The census was undertaken simultaneously in the 37 territorial units, 3 wildlife divisions and 2 national parks on June 16 to avoid duplication. Apart from the census figure, there are 24 leopards in various zoos in the state. Snow leopards have registered a marginal increase from 32 to 35 in the Great Himalayan National Park and Pin Valley as per the preliminary analysis of the census. The highest concentration of leopards is in Mandi among all districts of the state, where the number touched 222.
341	12	25-Jul-04	TIMES OF INDIA	Bamboo project to create jobs in Uttaranchal	A Rs. 265 core project of bamboo plantation and industry will generate employment opportunities on a large scale to the people of Uttaranchal. Recently an MoU was signed between Uttaranchal Forest Department and Uttaranchal Forest Development Corporation on one hand and Eland International, a Delhi-based company on the other hand. The plantation work will be done on 1,50,000 acres of Van Panchayat land. The company will provide planting material to village Panchayats, motivate people to grow bamboo and establish bamboo-based units in Uttaranchal. Training will also be given to villagers by the company through a society in making bamboo handicrafts.

342	12	15-Aug-04	TIMES OF INDIA	A treasure house of healing herbs	Sikkim is not only a repository of magnificent natural beauty, rich cultural tradition and dense forests, but it is also a treasure house of rare medicinal plants that are found only in parts of Uttaranchal. The state is recognized as one of the rare biodiversity spots having over 424 species of medicinal plants/herbs. Efforts are on to make inventories and documents recording all the medicinal plants found in this Himalayan state. The state government initiation in setting up of the State Medicinal Plants Board and proposal of setting up of a medicinal plants research institute are among the activities to develop these rare resources of the state.
343	12	21-Aug-04	THE TRIBUNE	Project to study Pong dam flora, fauna	To undertake economic evaluation of flora and fauna of the Pong dam wetlands, the Himachal State Council for Science Technology and Environment has sanctioned a project to the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). The Pong dam wetland in Kangra district is one of the largest man-made wetlands in northern India which attracts migratory birds from the trans-Himalayan zone. The reservoir is very important from the fish biodiversity point of view as it supports 20 freshwater fish species, including game fish like mahseer. The aim of the project is to determine the monetary value of biodiversity for the stakeholders and to study the magnitude of exploration of living resources.
344	12	26-Aug-04	TIMES OF INDIA	Govt moots project to relive Corbett memories	In the memory of famous hunter and writer Jim Corbett, who spent many decades of his life in Kumaun, a mega Corbett Country project will come up in Uttaranchal according to the Chief Minister of the State. The project includes features related to the life and time of the legendary figure as Corbett Museum, Wildlife Trails, Corbett Trecks, etc. The 512 crore rupees project is being looked at as a landmark in the development of tourism in Uttaranchal and this tourism destination spread over 802 acres in Hempur near Corbett Tiger Reserve.

345	12	1-Oct-04	BUSINESS STANDARD	Morarka push for organic farming in Shimla	The MR Morarka Rural Foundation has signed a memorandum of understanding with Shimlas district Rural Development Agency and another local organization called Sameti to promote organic agriculture in Himachal Pradesh. The Foundation has already begun conducting field surveys in nine selected blocks to identify ten village clusters suitable for launching the organic farming programme. The Foundation will arrange for expert personnel and conduct training programmes for the states field functionaries and members of the block technical teams in organic farming. Besides these, arrangements will be made for the procurement, processing and direct marketing of the organic farm produce in the domestic as well as export market.
346	12	4-Oct-04	KASHMIR TIMES	Over Rs. 1.35 crore envisages to boost horticulture in Udhampur	To boost horticulture production an outlay of over 1.35 crore has been envisaged under centrally sponsored Technology Mission (MM-II) programme during the year 2004-05 with a target of covering 450 ha of land in Udhampur district of Jammu & Kashmir. This will ensure plantation of 48 thousand fruit plants of different species and will generate employment avenues for one lakh people connected with his scheme. Under this programme, 1800 metric tons of fruit production is expected to be achieved in the next 10 years.
347	12	6-Oct-04	THE TRIBUNE	Steps to raise livestock productivity	The Himachal Pradesh Government has taken a number of steps to increase productivity of livestock in the hill state through state Livestock Development Board to upgrade milk cattle through cross-breeding. The Government of India has approved grant-in-aid amounting to Rs. 12.75 crore to the state for three years. Apart from this, the District Rural Development Agency is working towards boosting dairy activities. It is implementing dairy development in Mandi, Hamirpur, Kangra and Chamba districts at a cost of Rs. 28.25 crore.

348	12	7-Oct-04	THE TRIBUNE	Himachal nests 36 pc bird species	The lushgreen valleys and snow-capped mountains of Himachal Pradesh nest 36% of countrys species of aves. Of the 1,228 species of birds hata have been reported in India, 447 have been recored in the state alone. The state has the largest population of chir pheasants in the world. Western tragopan, an endangered species is confined to the western Himalayas. The state, a storehouse of biodiversity supports 3,120 species of flowering plants, including 187 medicinal plants, besides 5,721 species of fauna, which is about 7% of the total animal lifre recored in the country. However, only 100 species of vertebrate and invertebrate fauna are observed regularly.
349	12	10-Oct-04	KASHMIR TIMES	Gujjars, Bakerwals ignore anti-polio drive	Despite the funds pouring in for polio awareness campaign, specifically for the rural areas, a section of Jammu & Kashmir is still not benefiting from the efforts of the health department. The Gujjar and Bakerwal tribe of the state is one such lot that is not reluctant in taking polio drops but also a victim of misconceptions. Most of them resist bringing their children to the vaccine booths, fearing that these drops would lead to impotency in their children. Apart from that their religious constraints also discourage them intake thes drops. However, officials in the health department claim that they are under the process of convincing the rural section and also achieved some success in the state.
350	12	15-Oct-04	BUSINESS LINE	IBRD-aided watershed project in Uttaranchal	For the development and maintenance of natural resources, to meet the basic needs of local inhabitants such as water, fooder and fuel and for their economic uploft, watershed development projects have been given more importance in the state. The state Chief Minister launched the World Bank aided Uttaranchal Decentralised Watershed Development project, which will be implemented through Gram Panchayats and cover 19 developmnet blocks of 10 districts. About Rs. 405 crore would be spent for over 1200 villages generating direct and indirect employment in the region.

351	12	8-Nov-04	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Malnutrition high in Meghalaya: study	A study which was undertaken under the Mission 2007 initiative for hunger-free India by the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation said about 33.87% of the Meghalaya population lived below poverty line. About 37.9% of the children below 3 years being moderately underweight and 11.3% severely underweight along with a very high infant mortality rate (39 per 1000) in the state was recorded. Due to lack of potable water, diarrhoeal diseases posed a major problem to the populace. Land degradation and lack of vegetative cover could be the main reason for drinking water problems; the study said suggesting measures like thick forest cover to help pure and plentiful water.
352	12	15-Nov-04	THE TRIBUNE	Himalayan component to be kept aside	Contrary to the broad outlines drawn by the task force on rivers interlinking project during the NDA regime, identifying 31 links for preparing feasibility reports, the UPA Government has informed the Supreme Court that it will initially keeping aside the Himalayan rivers and focus on the peninsular component in the south. Out of these identified 31 links by the task force, 14 relates to the Himalayan component and remaining 17 to peninsular rivers. Political observers feel the controversial nature of the Himalayan component could be the main reason for not touching it at the moment.
353	12	17-Oct-04	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Cancer cases on the rise in NE	The number of cancer patients has been on the rise in the north eastern region, particularly in Manipur over past few years, according to the latest survey conducted by the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Imphal. The RIMS run by the North Eastern Council for the six beneficiary states Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, has been conducting research works in cancer. Types of cancer commonly suffered by men are lung cancer, nasopharynx and lymphoma, while a large number of women are affected by womb and breast cancer. The RIMS reveals that men are more prone to the disease. Excessive smokings, consumption of alcohol, use of tobacco and carcinogen products are the main cause of cancer among them.

354	12	11-Nov-04	THE PIONEER	Uranium mining project in West Khasi hills hangs fire	The hopes of Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) for gaining the official support of local landowners in West Khasi hills for the long pending Rs 800 crore mining project was dashed by the forceful protest by the local unit of Khasi Student Union (KSU) demanding government clarification on the decline in health due to uranium mining. However, some local miners along with leaders and landowners said that there was no health hazard as calaimed by the anti-mining lobby such as the KSU among others. The resolution to support the project could not be passed at the meeting due to the vociferous opposition by the KSU. In contrast, 20 villages in the area have decided to submit a memorandum separately to the Chief Minister indicating their support for the project, which can be taken as a step forward for the UCIL.
355	12	24-Nov-04	KASHMIR TIMES	73 pc Gujjars below poverty line: TRCF survey	67% population of nomad Gujjars in the state of Jammu & Kashmir alone is living below poverty line, claimed in a survey conducted by Tribunal Research and Cultural Foundation (TRCF), a primary organization working for the cause of Indian tribes. The survey says the Gujjars of Himalayan ranges are without sufficient food, fodder for their animals and lack of basic facilites like proper shelter, health, drinking water, education, etc. Moreover, 71% of nomads are not aware of schemes operating by the state and central governments for their upliftment, according to the survey.
356	12	27-Nov-04	THE HINDU	Dal lake gets a new lease of life	In a major attempt to save the world famous Dal Lake from extinction, purification of the lake would be carried out with hi-tech sewage treatment plants. The shrinking of the lake has caused concern among the residents. As per the plan, series of sewage treatment plants at the cost of Rs. 500 crores would be constructed along the lake and it was revealed that the Central Government had dicided to provide 100% financial assistance to the same. A rehabilitation plan has also been worked out which, in the long run, is expected to help in the save Dal mission. Out of the 6000 families living in the Dal, 1200 families have already been shifted.

357	12	10-Dec-04	THE SENTINEL	Arunachals pilot malaria project to serve as model for NE	Most of the states in the north-east and other parts of the country have decided to adopt the modus operandi of the Arunachal Pradesh pilot malaria project as a role model to control the dreaded disease in their states. The malaria control scheme which was completed in Lower Dibang Valley and Changlang districts of the state was highly appreciated. According to sources, the Arunachal Pradesh is one of the seven states, which would get substantial input during 2005-2009 under the intensive malaria control project.
358	12	27-Nov-04	THE SENTINEL	Mizoram leads the way in bamboo industry	Mizoram is preceded by no other states in India in bamboo projects, according to the Chief Minister of the state and newly set up bamboo board making industry at Sairang is also first of its kind in India. The other neighbouring states like Meghalaya and Tripura have huge annual income from bamboo produce mostly handicrafts. The state bamboo project is board-making, which will be a total substitute to timber and the State Government has allotted Rs. 1,600 lakh for bamboo processing project. The Minister also claimed the total bamboo resources in the north-east, which has the largest bamboo resource in India, are concentrated in Mizoram as the state has around 25 lakh metric tones of bamboo. However, the problem in bamboo industry in the state is transportation, as most of the bamboos grow in deep forest, which are inaccessible.
359	12	13-Dec-04	THE SENTINEL	Sikkim keen to be No 1 in eco-tourism	The Government of Sikkim has chalked out an ambitious plan to develop its infrastructure in its bid to become the countrys numero uno eco-tourism destination. Endowed with rich natural flora and fauna, Sikkim is redited with having nearly 4,000 species of flowering plants, 300 species of ferns and allies. Besides the state is gifted with more mountains per square km than any other area on the globe and the five glorious peaks, including worlds third highest the Kunchanjungha peak. It offered various facilities for eco-tourism, pilgrim tourism and adventure tourism including trekking and river rafting which proved popular in the river Teesta rumbling down the Himalayas.

360	12	16-Dec-04	HINDUSTAN TIMES	Himalayas not environment friendly: Study	<p>Historic Himalayan ice dams created huge lakes and caused mammoth floods in India, a new research says and suggests the Himalayas is not environment friendly. Ice dams across the deepest gorge on the Himalayas created some of the highest-elevation lakes in history. The most recent of these lakes, in the Himalayan Mountains of Tibet, broke through its ice barrier somewhere between 600 and 900 AD, causing massive torrents of water to pour into India. Geological evidence points to the existence of at least three lakes, and probably four, at various times in history when glacial ice from the Himalayas blocked the flow of the Tsangpo River in Tibet, according to University of Washington geologist David Montgomery, a Professor of Earth and Space Sciences. A group of researchers led by Prof. Montgomery found evidence of the resulting lakes in ledges carved into the sides of the Tsangpo gorge and also presented the evidence of repeated damming and flooding of the gorge.</p>
361	12	19-Dec-04	HINDUSTAN TIMES	Kashmir's wetlands may vanish in 10 years	<p>Kashmir's wetlands, temporary home to lakhs of migratory birds, are shrinking rapidly. The Wildlife Protection Department maintains that the wetlands are presently host to over 5 lakh migratory waterfowls from Siberia, Central Asia, China, North Europe and the Indian sub-continent. Rampant encroachment and lack of funds for the de-weeding and de-silting is the main cause of rapid shrinking of these wetlands. Environmentalists warn that if immediate measures are not taken to arrest the problem, Kashmir's wetlands will vanish in 10 years.</p>

362	12	26-Dec-04	KASHMIR TIMES	JK signs MoU with UNDP for earthquake reduction	The Government of Jammu & Kashmir have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country office for implementation of the Urban Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction (UEVR) programme in the cities of Jammu and Srinagar of the state. This programme is a part of the Government of India UNDP, Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programme, and is a national initiative taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs with UNDP support to reduce the vulnerabilities of communities in 169 most hazardous prone districts in 17 states of India. The programme would demonstrate a suitable model for mainstreaming of earthquake risk management initiatives at all levels so as to help reduce seismic risk in the most earthquake prone urban areas.
363	12	27-Dec-04	BUSINESS STANDARD	Uttaranchal farmers court aromatic plants	In a diversifying move farmers in the Selaquie area of Dehradun have changed to cultivating aromatic plants in the face of growing demand from the multi-billion cosmetic industry. From lemon grass to citronella, aromatic crops perennial in nature are now being grown in small pieces of lands as they require less water and the yield is much better. Moreover, animals do not eat them due to their strong smell. Help came in the form of the Rs 1 crore pilot project launched by the Uttaranchal Government with collaboration from a French NGO called Agrisud and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.
377	13	10-Mar-05	THE TRIBUNE	Pheasant population declining in Himalayan region	Mr John Corder, a conservation-breeding expert from the World Pheasants Association, has expressed concern over the declining population of pheasants in the Himalayan region and called for effective steps to reverse the trend. While the species like the western tragopan was already on the verge of extinction, the cheer pheasant, monal and some others were top on the list of highly endangered ones. The breeding programme in Himachal Pradesh is being carried out under the guidance of Mr. Corder for past 2 years and he is exploring the suitable site in Kullu district for captive breeding of monal. However, the state wildlife department has been pursuing a breeding programme for the past 15 years lacking much success.

378	13	10-Mar-05	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Wool from 3-4 chirus goes into one shawl	Conservationists armed with photographs of killing of chiru over the years and said that there are plenty seizures in Tibet, Nepal and India to show that the chiru is killed for its wool. It is possible to make out if the wool was naturally shed or not and they believe not a single shawl has been woven from wool shed in the usual course. Wool from 3 to 4 chirus goes into one shawl, according to them. The chirus home is Tibet, where temperatures can dip to -38o C and a recent survey put the number of chiru migrating to Ladakh in summer at a mere 163, admits the Jammu & Kashmir forest department. Subsequently the option of farm the chiru for its wool or harvest hair shed naturally to meet the trades demands is not adequate.
379	13	12-Mar-05	THE SENTINEL	Artificial dam : AUSSU fears catastrophe	Concerned over the unnatural accumulation of huge quantity of water in the Subansiri river in Arunachal Pradesh, All Upper Subansiri Students Union (AUSSU) has videographed the entire landslide zone and the swollen river to draw the attention of the authorities. An artificial dam created by huge landslides on last October that blocked the natural flow of the mighty Subansiri, has led to a 6 km long pond, 2 km off Siyum, around 80 km from Daporijo, the headquarters of Upper Subansiri district. The Union apprehended that the artificial dam, if breached by heavy rainfall would spell doom for the villagers living downstream. It is alleged that the district administration and State Disaster Management Cell authorities had brushed off the development as natural phenomenon.
380	13	9-Jan-05	THE SENTINEL	BHEL to set up 600 MW hydro project in Arunachal	The Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has secured an order for setting up the 600 MW Kameng hydro electric project in Arunachal Pradesh. Located in West Kameng district the project is a run of the river scheme situated at the downstream of confluencing rivers, Bichom and Kameng. The Rs. 214 crore order has been placed by the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO). The project is slated for completion in four and a half years.

381	13	11-Jan-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Arsenic in ground water detected in Manipur	Based on a survey report, the Manipur Chief Minister states that the Kakching block water laced with arsenic content varying from 100 ppb to 499 ppb, which is alarmingly high. According to specification laid down by the World Health Organisation, if arsenic content in underground water reaches 50 ppb, then it is unsafe for human consumption and can be hazardous to the environment as well. The arsenic content of the underground water is also very high in Assam, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
382	13	19-Jan-05	THE SENTINEL	HIV prevention project launched in Manipur	Project Orchid, a 23-crore HIV prevention project was launched in Manipur, one of the worst hit states in the country. Inaugurating the project, State Governor expressed his appreciation and hoped that the new initiative would prevent the growth of the HIV epidemic in Manipur. Sources in Project Orchid said it would dispense HIV prevention service in Manipur and Nagaland, including comprehensive harm reduction for injector drug users and prevention interventions for commercial sex workers.
383	13	22-Jan-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Hill Tiwas quest to retain ethnic identity	There are about 97 Tiwa villages in Karbi Anglong district of Assam and in the East Khasi district of Meghalaya are distresses from identity crisis. According to a rough estimate made by the Tiwa Cultural Society, the number of Tiwas living in Karbi Anglong district is about 35 to 40 thousand and in the East Khasi hills it is about 15 to 20 thousand. Though a great deal of confusion prevails about their identity because of the apparent similarity in their physical structures with the Karbis and Khasis, these hill Tiwas are trying to retain their ethnic identity with dedicated commitments. It is however, an irony of fate that geographical isolation and influence of developmental forces have forced some of them to changes their religion. These factors also forced some of them to identify themselves with the dominant tribes in their neighbourhood.
384	13	22-Jan-05	THE HINDU	Uttaranchal bags tourism award	Uttaranchal has bagged the Union Tourism Ministrys National Tourism Award 2005 for the best performing state in the country. It has been noted that the State Government has endeavoured to develop tourism in a planned and integrated manner. Lauding the role of State Tourism Department, the Chief Minister Mr. N.D. Tiwari said it was a mater of pride for the newly created state.

385	13	23-Jan-05	THE SENTINEL	Eco-tourism has come of age in Sikkim	Sikkim has been chosen by the UNESCO as one of the sites for developing eco-tourism. This initiative is being worked out in collaboration with the Seattle-based Environment Coalition of South and Sikkims village communities. Nestled in the eastern Himalaya the state is home to immense biological diversity and a rich cultural heritage. Eco-tourism is designed to help conserve the states natural resources and to develop economic livelihood opportunities. Innovative participatory approach is the spirit of the project which will strengthen the capacities of local communities to conserve the unique natural and cultural heritage of the state. The tourism officials say that eco-tourism has a significant presence in the state and will be a key contributor to the future of sustainable tourism development efforts in the state.
386	13	3-Feb-05	THE TRIBUNE	Pong wetlands home to 1.17 lakh migratory birds	Covering thousands of miles from trans-Himalayan region, nearly 1.17 lakh migratory birds of several species are roosting at verdant forests and grassy swamps of Pong Dam wetlands in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. Pong Dam wetlands, one of the largest man-made wetlands in northern India with suitable climatic conditions, rich biodiversity, and regulation of optimum water level, is known as a birds paradise, especially for migratory birds. The presence of gulls, a seashore species, at the wetlands also attracts the attention of ornithologists.
387	13	5-Feb-05	THE SENTINEL	Above 1,000 HIV positives in Mizoram	According to figures released by the Mizoram State Aids Control Society more than 1,000 people were tested HIV positive since 1990 with a total population of less than 9 lakh in the state. In Aizwal, the capital city itself reported 800 cases, and most worrying part is that out of the total affected persons around 40% are women. Admitting the alarming increase of the epidemic in the region the Society has started a huge awareness campaign among the people in the remote parts of the state. Meanwhile, the United Nations has already sponsored the setting up of the countrys first permanent women counseling centres in the remote villages of Mizoram.

388	13	26-Jan-05	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Uttaranchal to be a herbal state soon	The Uttaranchal government has prepared a conservation, development and harvesting (CDH) plan to boost the cultivation of aromatic and medicinal plants in the hill state. According to the Additional Secretary of Horticulture, under this plan, each forest range would have a conservation compartment earmarked for herbs, not to be disturbed by any other activities. Surrounding the conservation compartment there will be a development compartment which will have herbal nurseries and act as a buffer zone and the harvesting compartment will be outside the development compartment. He said 8 state-level herbal gardens had been set up in the state while some smaller gardens were also being developed with the help of local NGOs and institutes carrying on research on herbs.
389	13	12-Feb-05	THE STATESMAN	Naga women : status speaks	Although Nagaland has been a conflict zone for nearly 50 years and recorded highest population growth in the last decade, it ranks among the top states in India in terms of human development indices such as social capital, community ties and status of women. The Nagaland State Human Development Report published in association with the UNDP and the Government of India reveals that the state has higher rates of female literacy, school enrolment of girls, lower maternal mortality rate and very high participation of women in service sectors. These indicate of the higher standing women in this north-eastern state as compared to that in the country as a whole.
390	13	14-Feb-05	INDIAN EXPRESS	Uttaranchal overrules Govt, evicts Gujjars from Rajaji park	Despite clear cut orders from the Centre to halt eviction of forest-dwellers temporarily, in view of the proposed law to give propriety rights to them, Uttaranchal Government has hastened the process of evict Gujjars from the proposed Rajaji National Park. Sparking a protest, the Gujjars staged a Dharna at the gate of the proposed national park, forcing the forest officials to postpone their eviction campaign. Meanwhile, the Centre has decided to bring a legislation to give propriety rights to lakhs of forest-dwellers on the advice of the security agencies to end unrest and sense of discrimination against them, which has allegedly forced many of them to join the ranks of Naxalites.

391	13	21-Feb-05	HIDUSTAN TIMES	Killer avalanches hit J&K, toll 60	At least 60 people were feared dead after a series of avalanches triggered by the heaviest snowfall in Jammu & Kashmir in 15 years hit the higher reaches of the state. Thirty five others are feared missing. Villages in Poonch, Doda and Udhampur districts of Jammu region were the worst-hit after avalanches and landslides caused house collapses. Avalanches have also submerged several houses in Qazigund area.
392	13	10-Mar-05	KASHMIR TIMES	Govt draws flak over Ladakh hydel projects delay	Two Members of Legislative Council (MLC), representing Ladakh region in the House of Jammu & Kashmir asked for attention towards two vital hydel power projects - Neemo Gazbo and Shutul to help the Ladakhis overcome the shortage of electricity. Speaking at the Governors address, the MLC said that it was a long-pending demand of the Ladakhi people that these 2 projects, each of which would generate 44 MW power on commissioning, should be completed at an earliest. The MLC has also expressed reservations over the prospects of the projects under the supervision of National Hydel Power Corporation (NHPC), which is in charge of the projects at present.
393	13	20-Feb-05	BUSINESS LINE	Arunachal hydel project may be scaled down on Chinese concern	The ambitious 11,000 MW Siang Upper project, which would have been the countrys largest power project and the worlds third largest is likely to be scaled down to around 5,000 MW, mainly due to environmental concern raised by China. The Chinese authorities have, meanwhile, taken up the issue of submergence of its territory with the Centre and subsequently National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) is likely to review of the project size, according to the government officials. The Ministry of Environment and Forests provided the site clearance (Stage-I) for the Siang Upper project in December 2003. The clearance was subject to a reduction in the dam height to avoid submergence of Tuting Monastery and Dihang-Dibang biosphere reserve in Arunachal Pradesh.

394	13	24-Feb-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	NE forest area second richest in world: WWF report	<p>A report that bears tremendous significance to the North East, has recently confirmed that regions forests as the second richest in the world. The new report Biodiversity Assessment in the North Bank Landscape (NBL) has pointed out that the area a plot which had 107 plant species within 200 m² is second only to the number of species recorded in Sumatra, Indonesia. According to the report, the NBL covers approximately 14,000 km² of the Himalayan foothill region north of the Brahmaputra river, which includes parts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, North Bengal and Bhutan. The report prepared by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is based on a survey done in technical collaboration with the Centre for Biodiversity Management (CBM), Australia, with support from the Mac-Arthur Foundation and Smithsonians Centre for Research and Conservation.</p>
395	13	26-Feb-05	GARHWAL POST	Mahila Manch opposes Falenda river project	<p>The Mahila Manch and the Chetna Andolan expressed opposition on behalf of local villagers in Tehri district of Uttaranchal to the Falenda river project on the Bhilangana river. Opposing the privatization of the natural resources of Uttaranchal, they alleged that the government has planned 71 such projects on the rivers of the state, which are the misuse of states resources for the benefit of few people. The Manch is supporting the opposition to the dam, as the various projects being planned on the states rivers are damaging the precious resources of the state. They question the validity of development that involves the destruction of the villagers traditional holdings, sources of income and their life styles.</p>

396	13	14-Mar-05	THE TRIBUNE	Illegal mining leading to deforestation	Despite the ban imposed by the apex court on the all mining and quarrying activities in the state, illegal quarrying and mining has resulted in large-scale deforestation, landslides and flash floods in the past two years in Himachal Pradesh. The mining and quarrying has posed a serious threat to the existence of over three dozen irrigation and drinking water supply schemes. Official sources confirmed that in most of the cases the persons involved in these illegal mining because of political protection. The administration has become a silent spectator and officials are liberally granting them no objection certificates for extraction of stone, sand and other raw material.
397	13	15-Mar-05	BUSINESS STANDARD	Uttaranchal tops in hydel projects	Uttaranchal tops the list of states in number of small hydro projects in India followed by Andhra Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh. The state has set up 75 small hydro projects under the subsidization scheme of the Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources (MNES). The projects will generate 72.45 MW of electricity. In addition, 38 projects of about 26 MW are also being implemented. Small and mini hydel projects have the potential to provide energy in remote and hilly areas where extension of the grid system is uneconomical. The MNES currently provides incentives for detailed survey and investigation, detailed project report preparation, interest subsidy for commercial projects and capital subsidy for small hydro projects in the North-east and renovation/modernisation of old power stations and development of water mills etc.

398	13	25-Mar-05	BUSINESS STANDARD	Himachal drive to raise trout population	In a bid to save an endangered Himalayan fresh water fish, the Himachal Pradesh Government plans to raise its numbers by ten times in the next five years. The hill state is home to some of the major Himalayan rivers and their tributaries, besides natural and man-made reservoirs. The declining trout is found in some of the limpid rivers of the state. Experts say its numbers are shrinking fast due to environmental degradation and excessive fishing besides trout has died in large numbers in foreign-funded hatcheries. In renovation expansion plan of fish farms, the Centre has sanctioned a Rs. 2.12 crore pilot project for the promotion of cold water fisheries in the state.
399	13	25-Mar-05	THE TRIBUNE	Pahari livestock faces extinction	The sturdy Pahari livestock, including cows and bullocks, which still remain pride of the hill farmers, faces extinction as the states Animal Husbandry Department is yet to make a gene pool to protect and promote the native breeds. The farmers in Himachal Pradesh said that the Pahari breed is getting extinct due to horticulture as the apple and vegetable growers have stopped keeping the Pahari cattle. They prefer a Jersey cow for milk rather than the Pahari cow and power tiller or tractors instead bullocks. The Pahari breed is also vanishing as the department is promoting the Jersy, Holstein and Red Singhi breeds in the state under its livestock development policy.
400	13	6-May-05	THE SENTINEL	Epidemic hits livestock	More than 500 buffaloes and 100 cattle died due to an epidemic in villages like Didambra, Nablaidisa, Longren, Mailoo and Pat of North Cachar Hills district of Assam during last fortnight. Sources said that the villages which are situated on the banks of river Langting are the worst affected by the epidemic. Poisoning of river water may be the cause of the epidemic. The villagers requested the authorities to send a team of experts in the area immediately to save their livestock, however, the veterinary department doctors are yet to reach the place till date.

401	13	15-May-05	FINANCIAL EXPRESS	Melting glaciers may cause water shortage in HP	Scientists studying the Himalayan glaciers fear an acute shortage of natural drinking water in two basins located in Himachal Pradesh due to melting of glaciers owing various environmental reasons. The study was carried out in the Beas and Bapsa basins of the state from 1962 to 2001. Experts from the marine and water resources group of the Space Application Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), who actively involved in glacial behaviour studies for several years state that the probe using remote sensing satellites and other methods have indicated rapid decline in glacial waters due to environmental reasons including the global warming.
402	13	7-Apr-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Subansiri hydel project : a boon or bane?	It is reported that the draft agreement for Subansiri hydel project in Arunachal Pradesh will be executed soon between the state government and the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC). The author noticed some clauses of the draft agreement may cause anxiety for the people of Assam. These includes the effect on the people living downstream of the dam, different flow of river after construction of dam, rehabilitation and resettlement of the oustees from the project, responsibility of felling and removing trees, provision for compensatory afforestation, share of produced power within the affected states, etc. Consequently the Assams ecology will definitely change after the construction of the dams and reservoirs upstream as plants, aquatic organisms, birds, animals and people have to face changes and adapt with the new environment. The author also views that the huge dams and reservoirs in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam are grate risks for the people of Assam. Apparently there would be development, employment and revenue generation, but the benefit will be more for others and nominal for the state. The environment and ecology will be seriously disturbed for all time to come.

403	13	24-Apr-05	HINDUSTAN TIMES	A silent revolution in Uttarakhand hills	There is good news for poor farmers having small unirrigated land holdings in the hills of Uttarakhand as pilot efforts by the Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation (HESCO), the state department of science and technology and the local womenfolk have led to profitable cultivation of pulses and traditional coarse grains in several villages of Garhwal region that were having dismal agricultural production till two years ago. Showcasing the produce at a workshop held at Dehradun, the woman farmers proudly narrated how their domestic economies had witnessed an upward surge through cultivation of pulses. The director of the Science and Society Division also expressed happiness over the progress made in the field and hoped the womenfolk of Uttarakhand would make good money by supplying the highly nutritious pulses and coarse grains which were being recommended by doctors for good health.
404	13	3-May-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Eco-tourism in North East	The north-eastern (NE) states are very richly treated by monsoon every year for which tree covered hills, lush green enchanting tropical forests and blue rivers are very vibrant. These features have opened up the lucrative agenda of eco-tourism and generation of employment in NE states. It is an accepted fact that people of this region are far behind than the national mainstream in all respects. The author also views the lack of employment opportunities have given rise to various terrorists activities in the region. If eco-tourism is suitably developed, lakhs of unemployed youths will be engaged resulting income generation and less interest of unsocial activities in the coming years. It is commendable that the Sikkim is much ahead in this direction.

405	13	21-May-05	SAHARA TIME	Paying a costly price	The Naokuchia lake situated 24 km from Nainital in Uttaranchal has become second in the list of pollution in the region and is said to be a victim of the myopic vision of administration. Naokuchia Tal, the deepest (135ft) and most beautiful lake of the region with its most irregular shape and nine corners is only one in the entire central Himalayan having a natural lotus-biomass, now is one of the most polluted lake of the region. Recent findings of experts entrusted with the responsibility to test the waters of the lakes of this region at the reported project cost of Rs. 46 lakh under a scheme of national project for the conservation of lakes reveal this. Besides the biochemical oxygen demand indicative of the biodegradable matter in water phosphorous, fluoride and nitrogen contents are said to be increasing in the lake of which the water is supplied to the neighbouring villages without any treatment. A considerable reduction of water volume in the biomass area, the seeds of a fish called grass carp were put into it. Almost the entire biomass was consumed by this piscine-stock and for years there were no lotus plants to be seen.
419	13	3-Aug-05	THE SENTINEL	Forest eviction drive continues in Karbi Anglong	The Forest Department of West Division, Karbi Anglong district carried out a successful eviction drive in areas like Alaideo and Tolaram basti between Manglimukh and Missibailum under Dhansiri Reserve Forest located along the Assam-Nagaland border. According to Forest Department sources, at least 21 families belonging to Dimasa community were evicted from the forest area, while more than 200 hectares of forest land was evacuated from the clutches of the encroachers. The eviction drives are going on to clear the forest areas in Karbi Anglong district at the directives of the Supreme Court and all the divisions of the forest department had already evicted encroachers from many reserve forests of the district.

420	13	13-Aug-05	THE TIMES OF INDIA	Upside down : Drought in Cherrapunjee	The worlds wettest place is going through a crisis of having received just a few spells of short showers this year. Locally know as Sohra, the city normally receive over 20,000 mm of rainfall annually and sometimes up to 1,500 mm in a single day. This unusual pattern of rainfall can be attributed to the monsoon trough moving southwards from its normal position over the Cherrapunjee-Assam-Bihar belt and this shift has caused more rain in the Orissa-Maharashtra belt, admits Met official. Throughout the North-East, there has been less rainfall. According to Met officials Assam and Meghalaya received 29% less than average, while Arunachal Pradesh received 22% less.
421	13	August 01, 2005	ECONOMIC TIMES	Sikkim govt plans 3,639 mw of hydro-electricity by 09-10	In terms of sheer hydro potential, Sikkim might be the proverbial diamond in the rough but the Sikkim government has a plan to initiate of new projects this year to create 3,639 mw capacity by 2009-10. The power generated, besides feeding the state, will be supplied into the national grid. Sikkim will harness nearly 15% of this hydropower for free. In the proposed joint sector hydro projects, the Sikkim government will hold 26%, while private partners will hold 74% stake. Some projects will also be executed by National Hydro Power Corporation on the build own operate model. Recently a MoU was inked between the Sikkim government and a five-member consortium of private hydro undit developers to set up the 1,200 mw Teesta Hydro-Stage III.

422	13	8-Aug-05	THE SENTINEL	NEPED embarks on sustainable devp in Nagaland	NEPED, the Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development, is a project funded by Indo-Canada Environment Facility (IECF) to introduce micro hydel plants for harnessing extensive potential of streams and rivulets to boost mainly agri and allied activities in Nagaland. Continuing its efforts to ensure a sustainable development since 1995-96, NEPED has now introduced hydrogers, a device to generate electricity in a cost effective way from small streams and rivulets in remote villages to complement economic activities, mainly for increase of production and productivity in agri and allied sector. NEPEDs first two phases focused on two different areas of intervention tree plantation in jhum fields and micro credit to take up income generating activities by the villagers. With lessons leant from implementation of two phases of NEPED, which basically revolved around the concept on agro-forestry through peoples participation, the project now embarks upon bigger issues of sustainable development in the hill state beyond intallation of hydrogers.
423	13	17-Aug-05	BUSINESS STANDARD	Health herbs on Uttaranchal hills	Government wants to see the growth of Kalihari, an important medicinal plant found in parts of Uttaranchal in commercial basis which contains colchicin, considered to be an important herb. For this purpose, the government has clubbed kalihari in the 26 exclusive clubs of medicinal plants for which it has given permission for commercial exploitation o a larger scale. In a new government order, Gopeshwar based Herbal Research Medicinal Institute has been made the nodal agency to register all those farmers, who had been growing medicinal plants in their fields. Further a total of 26 species of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) have been identified to be entitled for a 50% subsidy. In this regard, the economics of cultivation of these 26 species has been prepared, which would be distributed to farmers.

424	13	17-Aug-05	INDIAN EXPRESS	First-ever pheasant census reveals 71,290 in Himachal	In the first-ever census of pheasants in the country, Himachal Pradesh has counted 71,290 pheasants including the endangered ones, as being habitat of the State. The wildlife wing of the Himachal Forest Department conducted the survey in May this year of 7 types of pheasants namely, the Red Jungle Fowl, Khaleej Pheasants, Koklass, Western Tragopan, Himalayan Monal, Indian Peafowl and Cheet Pheasants. Of these, the last 4 are endangered and are protected under Schedule-I of the Wildlife Act. Western Tragopan is also on the Red Data Book of the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The Census would help the Department in making plans for conservation of some of the endangered species of birds.
425	13	26-Aug-05	KASHMIR TIMES	1248 water bodies in J&K, Ladakh has the most	There are 1,248 water bodies/lakes exist in the state as reported by a study conducted by the Department of Environment and Remote Sensing, Jammu & Kashmir. A major share of these water bodies (about 637) are in Ladakh division, followed by Kashmir (about 500) and Jammu (about 111) division. These lakes are categorised as vally lakes, forest/alpine lakes, glacier lakes depending on the altitudinal variation. However, most of these water bodies having area of less than 20 ha, but 9 water bodies are spread over an area of above 1,000 hectare. Crystal movements due to faulting and folding are said to be the prime factors along with the earthquakes, which are responsible for the formation of the lakes according to the study.

426	13	26-Aug-05	THE SENTINEL	Mizoram to harvest all bamboos	The Mizoram Government has chalked out an array of measures to harvest all the bamboo trees in the forest before the full fledged flowering occurs. The flowering of the big grass, which is expected by next year, is a unique phenomenon that occurs every 50 years across the north-eastern region and Mizoram in particular. According to the Chief Minister of the state, the Muli bamboo (<i>Melocanna baccifera</i>) has grown over an area of more than 6,400 km ² , which is one third of the total area. However, a group of environmentalists in Mizoram have already raised concern over the governments bamboo policy, and its plans to harvest all bamboo trees before the flowering. They feared of ecological disaster in the region as the large scale harvesting of bamboo could leave the land fallow for many years to come, leaving farmers without fertile soil.
427	13	29-Aug-05	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Pachyderm movement in Garo Hills being monitored	With a view to preserving the traditional routes of elephants in the densely forested South Garo Hills district and prevent encroachment by humans on their habitat, Samrakshan Trust an environmental NGO has taken up the strenuous work of monitoring their areas of movement. It is expected that such monitoring, in the long run, will be resulting in man and animal living side by side without any form of conflict. As a pilot activity, this exercise is presently being undertaken in five Akings, namely, Amapangre, Alokpang, Halwa Atong, Gongrot and Panda. The Trust intends to eventually expand its scope to all 33 Akings that constitute the Balpakram Baghmara Community Conservation Landscape (BBCCL).

428	13	1-Sep-05	BUSINESS STANDARD	Uttaranchal and J&K govts to promote trout fishing	<p>Sensing a big export market for the trout, the Uttaranchal government has signed an agreement with NABARD to exploit the fishery potential in new areas in the state. Napcons, a consultancy service of NABARD will prepare a detailed project report on the trout and other fish after conducting a survey in the state. The government is currently producing fingerlings of the trout at its three fish farms in the Uttarkashi and Chamoli districts. With the market rate of trouts hovering around Rs 500 per kg., the government has also asked the revenue and forest departments to stop the illegal fishing of the trout, which is generally found at an altitude above 4,000 feet and between temperature 5 and 10o Celcius. The Jammu & Kashmir government is also planning to boost trout fish farming in the state, particularly in Jammu, a move it hopes would generate additional employment. The State Fishery Department has distributed nearly 5,00,000 fingerlings of various varieties of trout in districts of Kashmir division.</p>
429	13	6-Sep-05	BUSINESS LINE	Uttaranchal to focus on tourism infrastructure	<p>The Government of Uttaranchal will spend around Rs 100 core every year for the next 3 years on the creation of tourism infrastructure in the State. In addition, private sector investment to the tune of Rs 3,000 crore in the States tourism sector over the next 3 to 5 years has been envisaged. Of this proposed corpus, an investment amount of Rs 1,200 crore is already in the pipeline, according to the Principal Secretary of tourism, sports and youth welfare of the State. A master plan prepared by the State Government focuses on circuit tourism and destination tourism. Different circuits and stand-alone destinations would be promoted as tourist hot-spots in this regard. Towards this end, the Uttaranchal Tourism Development Board was working on coordination and synergy of the operations of the Kumaun Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) and Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) , the two tourism corporations of the State. Meanwhile, in 2004-05, the State attracted 1.4 crore tourists and revenue generated from tourism has been pegged at about Rs 3,000 crore in the last year with an expectation of annual growth of around 20% in the States tourism sector.</p>

430	13	6-Sep-05	KASHMIR TIMES	Macrophytes pose challenge to Dal, Wullar : ecologist	Presence of Azolla sp. is for the first time reported to be found in the waters of Dal and Wullar lake of Jammu & Kashmir. With its profused growth and due to its great potential of nitrogen fixation in these lakes, Azolla sp. has eaten up the vitals of other free floating species. Thus, posing a great challenge to the lake environment in general and ecologist in particular. A study analyzing the diversity of macrophytic vegetation in various fresh water bodies; Dal, Wullar, Manasbal, Ahansar and Nilnag lake; conducted by the Centre of Research for Development, University of Kashmir, Srinagar revealed this. The survey deals with the macrophytic composition of various fresh water bodies of Kashmir Himalaya. These fresh water bodies are not only situated within different geographical coordinates but also under varying degrees of anthropogenic impacts, the study-report pointed out. Aquatic habitats of Kashmir support a rich and varied nature of macrophytic flora. The study informed that the macrophytes comprise a dominant group of plants especially in shallow lentic systems, lakes and wetlands, that determine the functioning of these ecosystems. Moreover, changing human activities in and around the freshwater bodies have not only changed their physical and chemical milieu but their overall biological setup has also been largely altered puts forth the study.
431	13	16-Sep-05	BUSINESS STANDARD	World Bank all set to rescue forests in Himachal Pradesh	The World Bank could soon bail out Himachal Pradeshs shrinking forests by funding an ambitious Rs 370 crore preservation project. Shrinking forests is causing concern among several quarters in the hill state and has begun to affect the ecologically fragile green cover in the mid hills resulting notably in water scarcity and soil erosion. The project will be implemented in 7 years and the money will be spent in the ecologically fragile mid-hills varying from 1800 to 5000 feet in 10 districts, involving 400 panchayats, according to the World Bank officials. The primary focus of the project will be on the conservation of water resources which is fast shrinking in the mid-hills of the state. Afforestation, water harvesting, building check dams will also be carried out with the help of locals and other agencies.

432	13	21-Sep-05	BUSINESS LINE	Chescor firming up proposals for Uttaranchal eco-tourism project	A major \$200 million eco-tourism project in Uttaranchal is in the process of being finalised by the Chescor Capital, an international investment firm. The firm has been involved in developing and financing many projects in West Asia and India and now aims for setting a new trend in eco-tourism in India. The project will be developed as a pure eco-tourism venture with a very low density and green relaxing space, golf course and orchards. Around 800 acres of land have been allotted for the project on the outskirts of the Corbett National Park in the State. The project will be a destination resort with a host of facilities with the entertainment focus on nature. It would also serve as a hub destination for other tourist spots in the State.
439	14	20-Feb-06	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	The losing paradise	Manipur, the beautiful little Shangrila, is famous for the Loktak lake, the largest fresh water lake in the Northeast - a veritable miniature inland sea and the Keibul Lamjao National Park, the only floating National Park in the world, formed by run-off soil particles in the lake and getting bound by the roots of various species of aquatic plants and grasses. These floating mats locally called phumdi remain afloat due to its low specific gravity. But today, the lake is seriously threatened on account of damaging land use practices in its catchments, overexploitation of resources by a burgeoning population and its growing demand for land and food and also faulty and unsustainable economic development. Since the lake is included under Ramsar Convention as a wetland of international importance, many conservation works are going on to protect this amazing lake, but most of them are not so effective. The lakes ecological character is deteriorating gradually due to lack of maintenance and management skills. Only a concerted effort on the part of official agencies, professionals, NGOs and the local communities themselves on this delicately balanced, biologically rich wetland ecosystem, can save the lake from its demise.

440	14	18-Mar-06	THE TRIBUNE	Development taking toll on forests	<p>The adverse environmental impact of tourism and hydroelectric projects in Kulu-Manali in the north-western Himalayas has reached an alarming situation. More than 10,000 green trees have been cut during the past two years and about 30,000 are awaiting the axe of the so-called, development in this district. The Rs 2,000-crore project of the Rohtang tunnel would require felling of 684 fully grown and 350 small trees, just to make an approach road to the south portal of the tunnel, besides 20,000 trees would be cut to complete the 2051-MW Parbati hydroelectric project in the Manikaran and Sainj valleys of the district. A study carried out by the Himachal Unit of G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development, reflected that the environmental situation arising at Kulu and Manali due to increasing pressure of tourism and deforestation has registered dangerous proportions of polluted air, water and an increase in suspended particulate matter (SPM). The study further reveals that the indiscriminate throwing of municipal solid waste into rivers is a common practice in this district which results in polluting of the river water. According to Shri Kishan Lal, an eminent environmentalist, the pace of destruction of forests due to the pressure caused by tourism, hydroelectric projects, construction of hotels and other developmental activities would convert this part of the Himalayas into a desert if not checked.</p>
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441	14	20-Mar-06	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Unscientific mining on : Meghalaya PCB	<p>Mining activities in mineral-rich Meghalaya were being done in an unscientific and unplanned manner without any measure for reclamation of mined areas, the Meghalaya State Pollution Control Board has said. The main minerals are coal and limestone found in almost its entire southern belt of the state. Mining activities are mostly in private hands and such activities were causing severe water pollution and environmental degradation in the mining areas. As per information from the Directorate of Industries, the report said, there were about 3,800 industrial units or establishments in the state. Most of these were tiny units, non-polluting in nature, with some medium and small-scale cement plants, lime calcination plants, ingot manufacturing and steel rolling mills etc. However, a few of these were polluting and one of them was cement plant under large-scale industrial sector falling in the categories of highly polluting industries. While issuing consents, conditions were being imposed with regard to the effluent and the emission standards to which industries have to comply with. Conditions were also stipulated for setting up effluent treatment plants and/or installing of air pollution control systems whenever found necessary.</p>
442	14	24-Mar-06	THE HINDU BUSINESS LINE	Upper Siang project likely to be relocated on Chinese concerns	<p>The 11,000-MW `Upper Siang' hydroelectric project in Arunachal Pradesh, which would have been the country's largest power project and the world's third largest - could be shifted to an alternative site, 49 km downstream of the original site mainly due to environmental concerns raised by China. The Chinese administration has raised objections to the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) project since the reservoir, if executed at the original location, would have led to submergence of territory in Tibet across the Arunachal border during the construction stage. According to the Government official, the project is likely to be re-christened as `Intermediate Siang' on account of its new location and a decision on the revised project size would be taken once a fresh feasibility report is completed. Investigations have been taken up for the preparation of the feasibility report for the project at the new site, the official said, adding that the new production capacity of the project can be established only once the report is completed.</p>

443	14	15-Apr-06	THE SENTINEL	Global warming swells Tibetan lakes	<p>qThe pasture near the lake is flooded from time to time; in winter, it is often covered with ice according to the residents of Lhasa. In many lake areas, water springs out of formerly dry places, roads are flooded, and alkali is found no more in what used to be alkaline lakes. Many herders have also witnessed similar situations. The Remote Sensing Application Research Centre of the Tibet Autonomous Region conducted site surveys of five lakes in the prefecture and analyzed changes in the sizes of the lakes over the past two decades with remote sensing mapping. The study found rises in rainfall as well as in air and ground temperatures in lake areas but declines in water evaporation, exposure to sunlight, and thickness of snow and frozen earth which might cause the lakes to swell. The average water level in Naigri Puencog and two other inland lakes rose by 12.6 meters in the recent two decades, flooding an average 40.8 km² of pasture, cropland and roads. Despite the damages to the pastures and roads, many people say the local climate is milder than before as it gets warmer and rains more often.</p>
444	14	21-Apr-06	THE HINDU	Development projects not wildlife-friendly	<p>Environmentalists claimed that the development projects in Uttaranchal are not wildlife friendly and are especially causing harm to elephant population of the State. Raising concern about an elephantine problem as 90 elephants have been killed in the last five years, which was nearly 20% of the State's pachyderm population, according to Himalayan Chipko Foundation. After the formation of Uttaranchal state in November 2000 there had been a spurt in development activities in the State, dams, roads, bridges, transmission lines, canals were being constructed. Further, there was a proposal to build a four-lane highway from Dehradun to Tanakpur through Rajaji, Chilla and Corbett national park, posing danger to the wildlife and ecology of the area. Though development activities could not be stopped, however, such projects must have adequate planning to make them wildlife and eco-friendly, the wildlife activists believed.</p>

445	14	24-Apr-06	THE HINDU	Call to preserve Himalayan eco-system	<p>After reports that global warming, higher pollution levels and deforestation would lead to "death" of major Himalayan rivers, particularly the Ganga, and cause irreparable damage to the Himalayan eco-system, those closely associated with the region including mountaineers, glaciologists, climatologists and ecologists have urged the Union Government to take immediate measures for conservation of the fragile eco-system of the region. Demanding immediate revival of the Planning Commission's Himalayan Region Task Force, the experts have asked the Union Government to undertake the conservation of the Himalayas as a Central project with active involvement of all the Himalayan States. Cooperation of the countries located astride the Himalayas and those sharing common borders should also be taken for evolving a joint strategy for management of the Himalayas, they opined. Experts have also stressed the need for setting up a monitoring network along the Indian Himalayan Arc for collection of scientific data on climate change impacts, pollutant transport, cryosphere (the frozen water part of the earth system), high altitude limnology, medical and physiological sciences, high altitude fauna and vegetation, and assessment of environmental impacts for improved territorial use by setting up pyramid laboratory observatories in the Himalayan glaciers.</p>
446	14	17-Mar-06	THE TRIBUNE	Tibetans vow not to use animal skins	<p>Hundreds of Tibetans vowed not to use skins of endangered wildlife species and donated scores of 'Chubas' (traditional Tibetan over coats) as part of a special campaign to save wildlife. Tibetans had been traditionally using tiger and snow leopard skin on their clothing but it was now the need of the hour to save these endangered species from extinction. There has been a sudden eruption of environmental activism ever since the Dalai Lama made a strong appeal to Tibetans. The initiative has been taken by the Tesi Environmental Awareness Movement (TEAM), an environmental NGO based at Dharamshala of Himachal Pradesh.</p>

447	14	27-Apr-06	THE TRIBUNE	Autonomous wildlife authority on cards	The Himachal Pradesh state government is considering to setup an autonomous authority for the management of four major protected wildlife areas in the state. The State Forest Minister said the Great Himalayan Conservation Authority; the proposed organization would be responsible for the management of the Pin Valley National Park, the Rupi Bhaba Wildlife Sanctuary and the Kanawar Wildlife Sanctuary apart from managing the Great Himalayan National Park. He said the authority would have a flexible administrative procedure and governing board structure to help ensure continuity of funding across financial years and eliminate bureaucratic delays.
448	14	20-May-06	THE HINDU	Tripura tribals face eviction	The land dispute between the Revenue and Forest Departments of Tripura poses an eviction threat to 60,000 forest dwellers, at a time when Parliament is all set to pass the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Right) Bill. The families lost their right on the trees and timbers produced on the lands allotted to them by the Revenue Department, with the forest administration issuing a fresh ban order. The Revenue Department had allotted the land to the displaced, mostly tribals, about two decades ago. But now the forest official alleged that the Revenue Department cannot allot any forest land without the permission of the Forest Department and the dwellers are viewed as encroachers.
449	14	20-Jan-06	THE TRIBUNE	World Bank loan for watershed projects	The Himachal Pradesh government and the World Bank signed an agreement to enable the hill state to draw \$60 million for watershed development projects in the mid-Himalayan region. The primary objective of the proposed project is to reverse the process of degradation of natural resource base and improve the productive potential of natural resources and the income of rural households in the project area. The Gram Panchayat Watershed Development Plans (GPWDP) have been prepared in an informed, participatory, and transparent process that they may be implemented with adequate technical backstopping and the project performance can be adequately monitored and evaluated.

450	14	20-Feb-06	THE TRIBUNE	Rs 365-cr watershed project launched	The Himachal Pradeshs Chief Minister has launched the Rs 365 crore mid-Himalayan watershed development project at Parohi village in Kothipura of Bilaspur district. The Himachal Government had succeeded in winning the first-ever repeater Mid-Himalayan Watershed Development Project which would bring about economic rehabilitation in the rural area, especially the 545 identified Gram Panchayat of 42 blocks of the state. According to the Minister, the State happened to be an agricultural state, whose 90% population inhabited in the rural area and their livelihood depends upon agriculture-related activities. He also said the endeavor of the state government had been to provide better living conditions and improved economy.
451	14	23-Jan-06	THE HINDU	Tehri dam has killed two rivers, says Bahuguna	The Tehri hydel power project had spelt doom to two rivers - the Ganga and the Bhagirathi, apart from wreaking havoc on the livelihoods of river-dependant villages, alleged environmental activist Sunderlal Bahuguna. According to the leader of legendary Chipko movement, Despite of our protest for 15 years, the dam was allowed to come up by submerging over 22 villages along with 42 km2 of land holdings and over 1 lakh rendered destitute. Now, there is a plan to let the dam waters go beyond Haridwar upto Delhi. As Delhi had already killed the Yamuna, it makes for three dead rivers. The Save Himalayas movement led by him is now advocating tree planting on the hill slopes to check soil erosion, as the siltation caused by the dam was very high. This would not only enable village communities to benefit from tree produce, but also to conserve water.

452	14	24-Jan-06	TIMES OF INDIA	Diverting Sutlej could spell disaster : environmentalists	As Himachal Pradesh plans to tap its huge hydropower potential, environmentalists warn that diverting Sutlej, one of the fastest flowing rivers in the country, through tunnels could spell disaster in the event of an earthquake in the fragile Himalayan terrain. The state is planning 42 large and small projects to tap its hydropower potential of about 11,000 mw, which is more than a third of that of the entire country. If these projects were to be taken up, in about a decade's time the river could end up being diverted underground into various tunnels running over 150 km. While the government is excited about tapping the power potential and the huge revenue that will flow into the hill state's coffers, the greens disagree. They foresee disaster in the event of a major earthquake.
453	14	1-Feb-06	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Move on cash valuation of forests opposed	The Environment and indigenous peoples groups of the North East (NE) region have questioned the locus stand of the move to determine the cash value of the forest resources. They are of the opinion that the entire process to calculate the cash value of the forests is originated and dominated by those who are accustomed to putting a price on the priceless. Some of these groups also made arguments before the expert committee constituted by the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) in pursuance of the Supreme Court of India directive in IA No 566 in Writ Petition (Civil) 202 of 1995. This Committee is an independent body authorized to determine the net present value (NPV) of the forests in the country and is also mandated to formulate its own procedure and methods for the purpose. These groups also expressed their concerns for the women in rural and backward area keeping in view that individualization and commercialization move. Levying NPV would simply eliminate the role of the women and would thus affect their interests. In case the NPV comes into existence, industries would continue with the deforestation spree by merely paying such values. Besides, the industries would also resort to trading in the forest items to augment their profits. But all these would have heavy adverse impacts on the civilization of the NE people, argued these NE organizations. Some of them also resented the moves made by the State Governments in the region to bring an end to the practice of Jhum cultivation without providing any alternative to it for the people engaged in such farming.

454	14	12-Feb-06	DAILY EXCELSIOR	Himalayan yew faces extinction	<p>Indian Himalayan Forests have a rich availability and diversity of biological resources, especially, the medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPS). This is perhaps largely due to extreme climatic and edaphic conditions conducive to the growth, development and diversity of these plants, which constitute raw material for pharmaceutical industries. Infact higher plants have served human kind as source of medicinal agents since its creation. The Himalayan yew/common yew, technically known as <i>Taxus baccata</i> Linn. (locally known as postol) of family Taxaceae is a slow growing evergreen tree 12-30m height, densely branched having long outspread or ascending shoots with needles of 1-3cm. length, flat, shining above and light green below with single median vein having recurved margin, crown ovate or more globose. Since the extensive and reckless collection of taxus bark and leaves for the synthesis of taxol, all along the length and breadth in Himalayas and other regions have put it into the 2000 IUCN Red list of threatened species. It is therefore imperative that the threatened, fragile and over exploited <i>Taxus</i> species be preserved to the greatest extent possible for the future generations.</p>
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455	14	22-May-06	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Biological diversity of North East	<p>An appeal was shouted to strengthen peoples commitment and action for the conversation of biological diversity in the North-East on the eve of the International Day of Biological Diversity. The North East in India is a geographically distinct region and is well known for its unique bio-diversity. As an extension of the Himalayan range, the region is marked with hills, mountains, valleys, a range of elevations, platforms as well as depressions. It is one of the ten bio-geographical zones of the country. Sixty four per cent of total geographical area of the region is covered with various types of forests, especially, moist deciduous and alpine forests. Though the region embodies 7-8% of the total geographical area of the country it contributes about 26% to total forests cover of the nation. It is one of the major orchid habitats as nearly 50% of the total available 1300 species in the country are found in this region. The region is not only rich in floral wealth and endemic species of plants, but also habitat of many faunas including one horned rhino, greater adjutant stork, Gangetic river dolphin, vulture and many other mammals. Greater adjutant stork or Bortokola or Hargila is a very important globally endangered bird that is now on the verge of extinction.</p>
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456	14	22-May-06	THE TRIBUNE	Sanctuaries at Naina Devi, Norgu may be scrapped	<p>The Naina Devi and the Norgu sanctuary are among the four protected wildlife areas proposed to be scrapped under the rationalization exercise carried out by the Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh. Besides, boundaries of 15 other protected areas are proposed to be redrawn by excluding inhabited and cultivated areas and including those important for wildlife conservation. Spread over an area of 278 km², the Norgu sanctuary in Chuhar valley of Mandi district is the biggest protected area proposed to be de-notified. Naina Devi sanctuary (123 km²) in Bilaspur is also significant, while the Darlaghat (6.5 km²) and Sili (2 km²) are indeed small. The department maintains that these sanctuaries will not serve the purpose of providing a safe habitat for wildlife because of too much human interference or very small area. The Norgu and Naina Devi sanctuaries are dotted with human habitations, which is not conducive to proper management of protected areas as there is much biotic interference. However, environmentalists are not in favour of tinkering with protected areas frequently as it affects wildlife.</p>
457	14	23-May-06	THE STATESMAN	Attack of the wild worries Uttaranchal	<p>Its not the fear of criminals or natural disasters but wild animal attacks that is the biggest worry for people of this hill state. In the last five years, more than 150 people have been killed by wild animals as the forest department remained a mute spectator. People of the state, especially those living on the fringes of forests, are facing the constant threat of animal attacks. Wild animals, especially leopards, tigers, elephants and the blue bull damage crops, and houses and also attacks animals and humans. According to records of the forest department, in the last five years, ex-gratia has been given to the next of kin of 131 people killed in wild animal attacks. Besides this, 5,459 cattle have been killed by wild animals and 3,558 incidents of animals going on rampage and damage to crops have been recorded. There have also been instances of humans being killed by wild animals in reserve forest areas or in national parks, in which cases there is no provision for compensation under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. It is not only the people who suffer loss; many wild animals also lose their lives. In order to save their crops from the onslaught of the wild animals, villagers either poison them or electrocute them.</p>

467	14	1-Aug-06	THE PIONEER	Meghalaya to clean up coal mining act	<p>With prodding from the Supreme Court, the Meghalaya Government has decided to formulate a comprehensive policy on mining and allied industries and bring in appropriate legislation to regulate indiscriminate private coal mining and limestone quarries, which have adverse impact on the environment, in the State. The Cabinet decision came close on the heels of an apex court directive in response to a Public Interest Litigation filed by the Meghalaya Adventure Association (MAA), seeking the highest court's intervention in the ongoing indiscriminate limestone mining, destroying the unique cave system that dates back to the Jurassic age. The MAA pleaded that Meghalaya has one of the longest cave systems in the Indian sub-continent at Krem Katsoti that stretches over 22 km long with a string of as many as 39 caves, which are the storehouse of rare and diverse cave life forms, and therefore need protection. In response to the apex court notices, the government has convened a meeting between the MAA representatives and the officials from the departments related to these issues such as, the department of forest and environment, Meghalaya Mineral Development Corporation, Law etc, to hold a threadbare discussion on the issues and come up with certain common grounds. The cabinet has also decided to form an expert group under the chairmanship of the chief secretary to look into all the issues related to mining and allied industries as well as the environmental concerns and formulate a comprehensive policy and enabling legislation so that these issues are resolved once for all.</p>
468	14	14-Sep-06	THE TELEGRAPH	Return of the water tiger	<p>A giant freshwater carp nearly extinct in Kashmir might soon swim again in the shimmering rivers of the Himalayas decades after it disappeared. The Mahseer, known among Kashmiri anglers as tiger in the water, all but vanished after Pakistan constructed a dam in the late 1960s that stopped the fish from migrating to India. Now, conservationists are breeding the Mahseer and hope to release them in rivers in Kashmir. The programme is the result of a peace process between India and Pakistan that has led to a drop in violence in the region. The fish lives in clear rivers and lakes throughout India and Southeast Asia and needs fast-flowing rivers and streams in the mountains to breed. Finding enough of the thick-scaled carp in the area to breed at a farm in southern Kashmir proved difficult. Plans to conserve the Mahseer were disrupted in 1989 after militancy erupted in Kashmir and to fulfill the dream, militancy in Kashmir needs to remain under control.</p>

469	14	17-Jul-06	THE TRIBUNE	Forest policy to focus on eco-tourism	<p>The Himachal Pradesh has a vast reserve of forest wealth valued at over Rs 1 lakh crore, which needs to be protected and preserved. The thrust of the new policy is that forest could be preserved only if people could be ensured security of livelihood. A new functional classification of forests has been made where, the value of forest to meet the needs of conservation, production, community needs and urban services have been recognized. In addition to these new shifts, there is a greater recognition of environmental and watershed services of forests in the new policy. It recognizes the fact that hill state had uncultivable, barren land, snow covered peaks, which cannot sustain forests. As such a realistic target brings 35.5% of total geographical area under forest and tree cover had been set. A rehabilitation programme of degraded and open forests and available non-forest land has also been envisaged. A special focus on medicinal and aromatic plants as part of non-wood forest product management would be developed with an emphasis on livelihood security in both public and private lands. It is envisaged that the government will develop incentives to encourage forest-based industries and procure raw material for such industries from sources other than government forests. It is proposed that nature-based tourism including wilderness tourism will be promoted in consonance with the eco-tourism policy of the state is cold-desert areas cooperative micro enterprises will be promoted. Requisite institutional support to implement the new forest sector policy has also been outlined.</p>
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470	14	26-Jul-06	ASSAM TRIBUNE	Drive to save forests in Garo hills	<p>Alarmed at the rapid deforestation taking place in the once lush green forests of Garo Hills, a special drive has begun to bring to halt the booming trade in illegal timber from this region. Timber from the reserve forests have been making its way into these saw mills for sawing and transportation to neighboring Asom, which is the major market for this precious commodity. The ecosystem of the region is constantly under threat in view of the ongoing logging taking place deep inside the reserve forests and little effort has been made by the authorities concerned to try and put a stop to it. The State Forest department in tandem with the Garo Student Union and the police has begun conducting raids to dismantle the illegal saw mills which dot the countryside in the plain belt areas of West Garo Hills. It is felt that strict laws coupled with sufficient manpower in the Forest department ought to be made to act as a deterrent. Forest guards have to be given modern arms to tackle this menace and the border guards require to play a more proactive role in checking the smuggling of these precious commodities from Garo Hills.</p>
471	14	19-Sep-06	THE TRIBUNE	Power policy will disturb state ecology	<p>The Himachal Angling Association has expressed concern over the power policy being adopted by the Himachal Government. Mr K.B. Ralhan of the Association alleged that the lobby of the rich and resourceful companies had been trying to pressurize the Himachal Government into clearing their projects. In view of the prospects of high profits hundreds of projects in which waters of various rivers, streams, rivulets/nallahs were proposed to be harnessed. He said the Himalayan region was ecologically very sensitive and with the development of these projects (mini, micro or major) would disturb the ecological equilibrium. Blasting of rocks, digging of riverbeds and diversion of streams into tunnels, destruction of green cover etc. was bound to cause irreversible damage to the environment. He urged the Chief Minister of the state, to issue strict instructions to senior officials of Him Urja and Fisheries Department to ensure protection of aquatic environment and natural resources of important rivers and streams before clearing hydel power generation projects.</p>

472	14	12-Oct-06	THE STATESMAN	Sikkim focus on wildlife	<p>The valedictory function of the Wildlife Week celebrations on October 2006 concluded with a strong emphasis in involving the students in protection and preservation of the vast wildlife treasure of Sikkim. Speaking on the occasion, the region MLA, Mr Norzang Lepcha urged all and especially to the huge gathering of students to strive for protection of the rich flora and fauna of the state. Sikkim is only 0.2% of the total landmass of the country but possesses 26% of the total biodiversity in the country. Now responsibility is now our shoulders for protection and preservation of such wealth he said. There are 600 species of butterflies, 150 species of birds, 500 species of birds and 600 species of orchids besides about 15,000 species of flowering plants and some 450 species of medicinal plants are also exists in Sikkim. He also highlighted the paramount interest of protecting nature to the students in his address and appealed the Chief Minister to preserve the states rare and endangered species of flora and fauna which are unique and in some cases endemic in the region.</p>
473	14	9-Nov-06	ASSAM TRIBUNE	Exotic flora in Meghalaya is under threat	<p>Some of the specified plants enlisted under the Wildlife (protection) Act, 1972 remains extremely vulnerable in Meghalaya. The Act recognizes six plants throughout the country as specified plants. These plants: Beeddomes, Blue Vanda, Kuth, Ladies Slippers orchid, Pitcher plant and Red Panda are protected under the Act. Out of the six specified plants, three are found in Meghalaya; of which Pitcher plant is exclusive to the State. The Wildlife Act prohibits picking, uprooting, sale, possession (unless permission granted) of these specified plants. Due to its exotic nature this plant is most vulnerable to exploitation with illegal sale continuing in different parts of the State. The department of Forest and Environment here, in its bid to save the plant, has set up a Pitcher plant sanctuary at Baghmara in South Garo hills. Another sanctuary under the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council has been set up at Jiram in the district. Besides these, North Eastern Hill University on its own has set up a Species Recovery Programme to help preserve the threatened plants species of the region.</p>

474	14	November 16,	THE STATESMAN	Army plans eco-battalion	The Indian Army is eyeing a new role in the Himalayan state. It is mulling the concept of eco-battalion and Sikkim Scouts for protecting the enormous biodiversity of Sikkim. The Indian Army has such wings spread across the country for protection of environment and carrying out ecological drives like Garhwal Scouts and Ladakh Scouts. They have also participated actively in the state green mission conducted this year for avenue plantation. Addressing ex-serviceman from Sikkim, Lt General Rampal expressed immense happiness that the bonhomie enjoyed by 11 Gorkha Rifles was a fine example of camaraderie. Accomplishing the gathering includes the Chief Minister of Sikkim, he undertook We will be proposing the concept of an eco-battalion and Sikkim Scouts for environment and wildlife protection to the state government. We want to look after the flora and fauna of Sikkim.
475	14	3-Dec-06	THE TRIBUNE	A sacred mountain bleeds	The National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC), executing the 2051 Parbati project in Kullu district, is grappling with the "geological puzzle" pertaining to the gushing out of "red silt water" from the sacred Parbati mountain at a rate of 5000 litres per minute. The NHPC was hoping that the flow of red water carrying silt and clay, leaking into the 31.5-km-long under-construction tunnel for the past one week, would recede, but it has shown no such signs. The General Manager of NHPC has ruled out the flow to be any major geological problem posing danger to the environment and people, including labourers, in the project. The water further flows into the Gadsa khad, a tributary of the Beas, giving sleepless nights to villagers in the downstream.

476	14	18-Dec-06	THE STATESMAN	Forest Bill, tribal rights: elite brazen	<p>Studies revealed that where there are tribals, the forest areas had been dense. While piloting the Scheduled Tribals and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2006 in the Lok Sabha, the tribal affairs minister Mr. P.R. Kyndiah believed that tribal and forest dwelling communities are the most efficient conservationists. These are unexceptionable remarks and all who support tribal rights will back Mr Kyndiah. There has been for long a furore and incomplete debate over the rights of tribal and other marginalized groups living in forests and the strenuous efforts by the state forest departments to evict them. The case of the Gujjars in the national park of Uttaranchal is one of the best-known ones. The Chipko Andolan of C.P. Bhatt and Sunderlal Bahuguna where the women in the Garhwal hills hugged trees, in Bishnoi style, to deny the contractors and the forest department access to the trees which are the basis of their livelihood. The hug the tree movement became an international symbol not just of protest but galvanized women power and the consciousness of rural but marginalized groups about the need to conserve ecosystems.</p>
477	14	December 19,2006	THE TRIBUNE	Project to revive fish in Ravi, Beas rivers	<p>The mahaseer" fish facing extinction in the Beas and the Ravi is all set to get a major boost as the Rs-2 crore Mahaseer fish farm coming up at Machial in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh, which will be country's major experiment in the direction for reviving once rich marine life in the fresh water Himalayan rivers in the state. According to Sehgal report on fish in the cold water of the Himalayan water, the mahaseer fish has been pushed to brink by the construction of the Pandoh Dam near Machial and the Pong and Thein Dam on the Beas. These dams checked the movement of the mahaseer fish upstream over the decades. The river life, once rich with fish, contains a little marine life today. However, it is for the first time that the seed protection technology is being put to test at the mahaseer fish farm at Machial, revealed fisheries officials. "If it turns out to be successful, it will revive Mahaseer in the Beas and the Ravi, which were eliminated due to the dams on the rivers".</p>

478	14	23-Dec-06	THE HINDU	Engaging with global warming	<p>Due to an alarming increase in global warming, the entire world community is facing a major crisis. Melting of permanent ice shelves and glaciers is posing a serious threat to the existence of humankind. As the crisis is particularly grave in the Himalayas where the glaciers are receding fast, members of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) have emphasized the need to study the effects of global warming on mountain glaciers. "If nothing is done within the next decade or two, the Indus, the Satluj, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra are likely to become seasonal rivers," they warn. The study area is located at the Pulan and Zhada regions of Tibet, where there are two famous mountains; Mount Kailash or Gang Rinpoche and Mount Jiemayangzong, where glaciers are widespread. Comprising four Indian and three Chinese scientists and two mountaineers because of mountainous topography, the team will collect baseline data so as to have better "management of our water resources".</p>
491	15	2-Apr-07	THE TELEGRAPH	A Himalayan water crisis awaits India	<p>Global warming may melt 80% of Himalayan glacial cover and leave India thirsting for freshwater by 2030, according to a draft UN climate panel report slated for release. The draft, which is yet to be approved from the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) describes regional impacts of rising temperatures, widely blamed on emissions of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels. The IPCC-India has declined to comment on the contents of the report saying it is still in a draft stage. However, scientists who have been tracking the fate of Himalayan glaciers for several years said some dramatic impacts within the next 20 or 30 years would be consistent with trends already visible in the Himalayas.</p>

492	15	20-Jun-07	INDIAN EXPRESS	Experts warn Ganga under grave threat from warming	India's holiest river is under greater threat than ever before, according to scientists and meteorologists. Latest finding show that the Himalayan source of the Ganga is drying up at a rate of 40 yards a year, nearly twice as fast as two decades ago, and that some of these glaciers might disappear by 2030. In the dry summer months, the Gangotri glacier provides up to 70% of the water of the Ganga and in India, the river provides water for drinking and farming for more than 50 crore people. According to an UN Report, the Himalayan source is drying up at a rate of 120 feet a year, nearly twice as fast as two decades ago. The immediate effect of a glacier recession is a short-lived surplus of water. But eventually the supply runs out, and experts predict that the Ganga eventually will become a seasonal river, largely dependent on monsoon rains.
493	15	9-Jan-07	ECONOMIC TIMES	WB approves Rs 30 cr bio-carbon project in HP	With an aim to promote greenery in Himachal Pradesh, the World Bank has approved a Rs 30 crore bio-carbon project in the state for plantation work. According to the State Forest Minister, all 600 Panchayats in the state would be covered under the scheme targeted to carry plantation in over 12,000 hectares of fresh land. One woman has to be engaged as a "motivator" under the project, the minister said. In addition, the Bank had already sanctioned a sum of Rs 365 crore under the 'Mid-Himalayan Watershed Development Programme' that intended to promote integrated development of horticulture and agriculture in the state.
494	15	26-Mar-07	THE TRIBUNE	Chiru no more being hunted, J-K Govt tells SC	The Jammu and Kashmir Government has told the Supreme Court that the endangered Himalayan antelope Chiru was no more being hunted in the state for extracting rare wool for making shahtoosh shawls. However, the state government was accused by conservationists for not implementing the apex courts 2005 direction for certifying each and every old shahtoosh shawl owned by people. Clarifying the allege that the trade is continuing in the state, the advocate-general of the state admitted that the wool could have been brought to the state from Tibet via some smuggling routes in Nepal but after the ban, no manufacturing and trade was being allowed in the state.

495	15	4-Jan-07	THE PIONEER	Indo-Polish project to reclaim geo-ecosystem of Cherrapunji	<p>A team of Indian and Polish geographers is working together to reclaim the degraded geo-ecosystems of Cherrapunji. Cherrapunji said to be the wettest place on the earth, located on the southern spur of the Meghalaya plateau, which is, ironically, facing acute water crisis. It is certainly one of world's unique geographic puzzles about Cherrapunji, which fall close to the line of Tropic of Cancer, should have been a 'dry desert', just as it has been observed in other parts of the world situated on the similar latitude such as, the Great Indian desert of Rajasthan and the Sahara of Africa. But quite the contrary, the scientists observed, Cherrapunji receives an average annual rainfall of about 12000mm and wears a verdant look. They warned that the looming global climate change might cause more unstable weather and higher frequency of extreme rainfalls in the Cherrapunji region. The main objectives of the research were to examine the physical and hydrological elements. To understand the rainstorm characteristics and the conditions of water circulation, to measure and evaluate the intensity of rainfall, run off and denudation rates in the Cherrapunji region and to identify the causes of its geo-ecosystems degradation.</p>
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496	15	4-Jan-07	THE TELEGRAPH	Tripura SOS on arsenic	<p>Worried over the presence of the high level of arsenic in underground water in the state, the Tripura Government has sought help from the water supply wing under the Union Rural Development Ministry. Luknow based Industrial Toxicological Research Centre (ITRC) scientists had submitted a report to the state government, in which they had confirmed the presence of arsenic in water samples collected from the eastern part of West Tripura, Kamalpur subdivision of Dhalai district, Amarpur and neighbouring areas in South Tripura and remote areas of Kanchanpur subdivision in North Tripura. According to official sources of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) department high level of iron has been found in 85% of water sources in Tripura which is responsible for a high incidence of gastro-enteric diseases and gallstones. However, the presence of high iron content in underground water is common in all hilly areas of the Northeast, said the official of the PHE. The state already has 100 iron removal plants and the state government has decided to set up 150 more iron removal plants all over the state to purify the underground water which contains disproportionately high iron content. Moreover, 17 surface water treatment plants would be set up in different parts of the state.</p>
497	15	19-Jan-07	THE STATESMAN	Hunt for the clouded leopard	<p>Neora Valley National Park in Darjeeling has begun its first survey of the clouded leopard in an attempt to find out more about this elusive, endangered species. The year-long study jointly carried out by the state forest department and Nature Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS), a voluntary organization, will also look at eco-tourism prospects in the park. The survey hopes to find out the estimated clouded leopard population of the park, as well as observing daytime and nocturnal behavior and its prey base. Authorities hope sightings of the clouded leopard by park rangers will prove a major pull for travelers seeking eco-tourism holidays. The 88 km² area of the park is also home to the endangered red panda and musk deer. Other species include leopard, five species of civet, black bear, sloth bear, golden cat, wild boar, barking deer, sambar, Himalayan flying squirrel and thar.</p>

498	15	15-Feb-07	THE PIONEER	Pheasant-breeding project to be revived in HP	The pheasant-breeding programme in Himachal Pradesh, which had been derailed by bickering in the Forest Department, will be soon back on track with the return of expert John Corder. This Pheasantry project funded by the Central Zoo Authority had been making remarkable gains under Corder since 2002 and led to successful breeding of the western Tragopan in captivity for the first time in the world. But after his departure, there was no breeding in 2006 as none of the eggs laid in two clutches hatched, putting the department in the firing line. The Government has decided to set up a search committee and according to them natural breeding is considered the best course of conservation of pheasants as the ultimate objective is to re-introduce the birds in the wild. However, in the process, the project has fallen behind by almost two years.
499	15	3-Apr-07	TIMES OF INDIA	Himalayan meltdown catastrophic for India	The result of the melting of most of the Himalayan glaciers by 2030, as predicted by the UN panel on climate change, could be truly catastrophic for India and its neighbors. The Himalayan region, called the 'Water Tower of Asia', has glacier coverage of about 33,000 km ² . It provides around 8.6 million cubic metres of water annually. As much as 70% of the world's fresh water is frozen in glaciers. The Himalayan glaciers are the largest store of water outside the polar ice caps, and feed seven great Asian rivers, namely Ganga, Indus, Brahmaputra, Mekong, Salween, Yangtze and Huang Ho (Yellow River). The glaciers are believed to be retreating at a rate of about 10-15 metres a year. The first danger of the meltdown could be widespread flooding. In a few decades, it could be followed by irreversible droughts, threatening the livelihood of millions of people. This would not only mean unprecedented food shortages but also a massive water crisis in the entire Gangetic basin, which alone is the home to more than 500 million people.

500	15	11-Apr-07	THE TRIBUNE	Waste management plant gets approval	<p>The local Municipal will setup a solid waste management plant here for the disposal of gradable and degradable waste of the Palampur town of Himachal Pradesh. The department of urban development of the state government had already given its financial approval to this project. According to Mr. Brij Behari Lal, local MLA and political adviser to the Chief Minister, Rs 90 lakh would be spent on this project and a seven-kanal piece of land had also been transferred to the Municipal Council for this project. Gurdev International Limited, a company dealing with the installation of such plants would provide technical know-how to the municipal council to run the plant. In western countries such solid waste management plant had proved very successful because of the fact that these plants were totally pollution free. And the government has the top priority to keep this hill town clean and pollution free, according to him.</p>
501	15	28-May-07	THE TRIBUNE	Reckless cutting of hills, trees by power company	<p>Resentment prevails among residents of Palampur in Himachal Pradesh over reckless cutting of hills by a private company executing a 15-MW power project here. Villagers from three Panchayats of the Bundla and Kandi areas adjoining Palampur town have lodged a protest against the company and demanded immediate suspension of the work on the project. They have alleged that the ecology of the region has been affected. Twelve irrigation channels and drinking water supply schemes feeding a population of 2 lakh in the lower areas of Palampur have also been affected. According to Palampur divisional forest officer (DFO), the company had deposited Rs 10.29 lakh as cost of trees with the government so far and the sanction was given for felling 724 trees. Besides, the company was also allowed to utilize 30 hectares of forestland for the execution of 15-MW powerhouse. The company had also deposited an additional amount of Rs 49 lakh under the catchment area treatment plan. Meanwhile, the Palampur Welfare and Environment Protection Forum has expressed concern over the reckless cutting of hills by the company. The forum also said If early action was not taken it would cause flash floods in the coming raining season affecting the lives of people leaving in lower areas of Palampur.</p>

502	15	15-Jun-07	THE STATESMAN	Ski project runs into rough weather	<p>The proposed \$350-million project for setting up an international Himalayan Ski Village (HSV) in Himachal has run into rough weather with some leading environment activists of the country deciding to launch a major agitation against it. The state government has cleared the detailed project report, giving the green signal for work to begin on the project spanning over 6,000 acres of land and affecting at least 70 villages in the region. Promoted by Mr Alfred Ford, the grandson of the legendary Henry Ford, the project envisages 700 rooms at its international level hotels, apart from 300 Swiss-style chalets, spas and a handicraft village, shopping complexes and several other facilities. Several NGOs including Mr Sunderlal Bahuguna of the Chipko movement and a number of environmental scientists and activists have joined forces now to oppose the project claiming that it would harm the fragile topography and ecology of the region. The activists also claim that the mega-tourism project will pollute land, air and water resources in the area and also affect peoples livelihood and life-style adversely.</p>
503	15	16-Jun-07	THE TRIBUNE	Endangered high-altitude animals	<p>The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has assigned the responsibility of the lead agency to the zoos of the hill states for the conservation breeding of monal and cheer pheasants and brown bear. Besides, its zoos will also participate in the programme for breeding Tibetan wolf, musk deer and snow leopard. The leading zoos for the conservation programme include Himalayan Nature Park (Kufri), Padmaja Naidu National Zoological Park (Darjeeling), and Chopta Zoo (Uttarakhand). The CZA also approved in principle of Rs 3.30-crore project for the captive breeding of cheer pheasant. The World Pheasant Association (WPA) has been concerned over the dwindling population of the bird and encouraging efforts for its conservation. The species already figures in the red data book of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and included in the schedule 1 of protected species under the Wildlife Act.</p>

504	15	27-Jun-07	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Orchid conservation key to economic progress of Karbi Anglong	<p>Karbi Anglong of Assam is considered as nature's treasure trove and home to orchids, known for its exquisitely beautiful blooms, from one of the dominant textures with as many species, occurring in varying elevations and climatic conditions throughout the district. At least 80 varieties of different orchids are found in the district, some of which bloom in different seasons. Among them, <i>Aerides multiflorum</i>, <i>Cymbidium devoneanum</i>, <i>C. longifolium</i>, <i>Calanthe measure</i>, <i>Coelogymne nitida</i>, <i>Dendrobium fimbriatum</i>, <i>Dendrobium farmeri</i> etc, are found in abundance in the district. Some species of the orchids are also identified as medicinal species. In order to make use of these qualities cultivation of medicinal plants are not only commercial but also safer ecologically. Besides, there is a vast scope for developing allied and subsidiary industries in addition to floriculture. In addition, if the concerned authorities of Karbi Anglong district adopt the practice of cutflower production then economic development can be achieved in the district. However from this point of view, there is a potential for developing jewellery imitating orchid flowers, carpets with the picture of orchids, bamboo and cane articles depicting the ornamental orchid flowers, etc which could be used by the traders for sale as mementos to the tourists.</p>
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505	15	15-Jul-07	THE ECONOMIC TIMES	India plans strategy to tackle global warming	<p>Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has asked policymakers to come up with a detailed national plan by November to tackle the effects of global warming. In a meeting of his Council on Climate Change, he said that our government plans to undertake a major afforestation programme called Green India for greening six million hectares of degraded forest land and insisted the members of the Council to prepare a comprehensive roadmap for energy efficiency and sustainable development. The Kyoto deal on global warming requires industrialized countries to reduce emissions of six greenhouse gases by 5.2% by a target of 2008-2012 compared with their 1990 levels. India, along with China, is not included for targeted emission cuts under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the only global agreement that sets specific targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. India blames the industrial nations for the problem, and has in the past called for further commitments from them to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Dr. Singh said India would be badly hit because of its dependence of monsoon rains for farming and the Himalayan snow-fed rivers and the country's large coastline. He also said India had for decades laid stress on hydro and nuclear energy but needed to do more to explore newer ways of green development.</p>
506	15	22-Jul-07	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Renewable energy programmes in NE	<p>The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India is implementing various renewable energy programmes in the north eastern (NE) region of the country, according to an official release. A total of 1, 246 family-type biogas plants have been set up in the region during 2006-07 till January 31. The National Biogas and Manure Management Programme (NBMMP) is being implemented in the NE through state departments and agencies. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) implement the programme in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. During the year 2006-07, 11,500 solar home lighting systems, 500 street lighting systems and 8,000 solar lanterns and 35 solar pumps were allocated under the Solar Photovoltaic Programmes (SPV) to the NE by the Ministry.</p>

507	15	25-Aug-07	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Eruption in Arunachal hill	Gases and molten rock-like substances spewing from a small hilly area along the Kimin-Ziro road in Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh have prompted the Geological Survey of India (GSI) to investigate the phenomenon. People in the area claimed that they saw flashes shooting up into the sky and heard rumbling sounds on the night of August 21. According to GSI, there was no record of such activity in the area in the past. The molten glassy material collected from the site by the GSI team will be sent to Kolkata for chemical analysis to determine the cause of the eruption in the area.
508	15	20-Sep-07	THE TRIBUNE	Policy to relocate wild animals soon	The Centre will soon come out with a comprehensive policy to facilitate translocation of wild animals to help reduce the animal-human conflict. Union minister of state for environment and forests Shri S. Ragupathy, who is on a three-day visit to Himachal Pradesh, said that various states were facing problems due to an increasing human-conflict with leopards, monkeys and other animal making frequent forays into human settlements. The proposed policy would take care of all aspects like nature of habitat and carrying capacity of the forests to identify the areas for translocation of the animals. The animals could be relocated either within the same state or shifted to some other states, subject to their willingness. The Centre would also support programmes to contain the population of animals like monkeys through sterilization and other methods. He was impressed by the initiative to introduce the concept of carbon credits taken under the Rs 365-crore World Bank-funded Mid-Himalayan Watershed Development Project which would enable the villagers to earn Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000 per hectare annually from the plantations for a period of 30 years.

509	15	September 23, 2007	THE TRIBUNE	Power firms indulging in reckless felling of trees	The reckless felling of trees by various companies executing power projects in the Dhauladhar ranges of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh has become a matter of serious concern. Though the government had granted permission for the felling of trees certain power companies had axed more trees than the sectioned numbers. Information revealed that the Forest Department had already compounded the offences by imposing nominal penalties for indulging in illicit felling. No stringent action had been initiated against defaulters under the HP Forest Act. The felling of trees had also caused immense loss to the environment. A number of natural water resources have also been damaged in different parts of the region and as many as 12 drinking water supply schemes getting water from the Neugal river had adversely been affected. Raising concern to the region, Palampur Welfare and Environment Protection forum had asked the government to review its policy on the allocation of small hydel projects to private parties.
510	15	9-Oct-07	for THE PIONEER	Manipur to develop Sadu Chiru waterfall	In a move to develop the newly-explored Sadu Chiru waterfall in Senapati district of Manipur, the State Government has taken up several steps in recent times. According to the state tourism officials, around 550 acre of land is required for the project. The State Government had even submitted a project proposal on Development of Sadu Chiru waterfall complex to the Union Tourism Ministry. The tourism minister appealed to the villagers of the region to conserve the environment of the Sadu Chiru area. Regarding the controversy arising out of the naming of the waterfall, he called upon the villagers to work it out once the developmental project is being taken up. The Minister also visited the Waroiching hillock under Oinam assembly constituency in Bishnupur district of the state to take up another project of his department.

511	15	31-Dec-07	THE PIONEER	Man-animal conflict, Forest Conservation Act	<p>Uttarakhand's rich biodiversity in terms of forest wealth and wildlife had its own set of problems and achievements in the year 2007. A State with on overwhelming presence of forests and richness in wildlife had to cope with the rising man-animal conflict on one hand while on the other the Forest Conservation Act is continued to be widely perceived as the biggest stumbling block in the State's quest for development. The Uttarakhand Forest Department has initiated bridging the growing attitude of indifference among villagers vis-à-vis forests. It not only encouraged volunteers for prompt action in case of detection of fire in the forests adjoining to their places of residence but also extended them with monetary support when necessary. On the wildlife front, the forest authorities had a tough time dealing with rising incidents of man-animal conflict. While man-eaters continued to target human settlements in remote hilly villages, the elephants in the plains too made village hamlets as select targets leading to further escalation of conflict. But amidst this, the Uttarakhand wildlife department got a major boost with the Central Wildlife Board giving a green signal for the construction underpasses on highways falling in the way of the elephant corridors in the State. In another bid to ease the conflict, the department also decided to enhance the compensation for the victims of wild animal attacks. However, Uttarakhand managed to retain its rich forest wealth while the rest of country struggled to save its forest wealth.</p>
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512	15	31-Dec-07	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Uranium mining cleared	<p>The Union Ministry of Environment and Forests has allowed Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) to commence uranium mining in Meghalaya. After examining application, the Ministry accords environmental clearance to the Kylleng- Pydengshohiong Uranium Mining and Processing Plant Proposal of the UCIL. The clearance has been given for an annual production capacity of 3,75,000 tonnes of uranium ore by opencast mechanized method and processing of 1500 tonnes per day of ore processing plant involving total land requirement of 351 ha at Mawthabahn in West Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya. The clearance also said that no ecologically sensitive area such as national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve or tiger reserve is reported to be located in the core and buffer zone of the mine and that the area does not form corridor for Schedule-I fauna. However, the clearance is subject to implementation of certain conditions and environmental safeguards which has been intimated to the UCIL.</p>
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534	16	20-Feb-08	THE PIONEER	Wildlife dept to hold first ever census of Himalayan Monal	<p>For the first time, Uttarakhand Wildlife authorities are trying to ascertain the true numerical count of its State bird Himalayan Monal. The pheasant keeps a commendable presence in the higher reaches of Nandadevi, Govind and Gangotri National parks and the Kedarnath wildlife sanctuaries of the State. There is so far no population database of Himalayan Monal vis-a-vis Uttarakhand. "Being a State bird, it is very important to know its numerical strength in Uttarakhand," Chief Wildlife Warden Srikant Chandola told The Pioneer. He disclosed that the census exercise would begin on February 29 and would be carried out by the forest authorities. He apprised that the census would also include estimation of vultures, peacocks and other birds. The number of Monal has always been a matter of curiosity among bird lovers of Uttarakhand. Welcoming the decision to conduct the census, a bird expert JP Sati said such census would bring out the true population of this important pheasant of the State. He confirmed that till date no such population estimation of Monal has ever been done. With its distribution along the Himalayas from Eastern Afganistan alongwith North Pakistan to Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh, that includes Uttarakhand, Himalayan Monal has a distinct position among pheasants due to its prominent build, brilliant plumage and strong association with local folklore. Uttarakhand is one of the richest bird areas of the country and harbours as many as 50 per cent of the total bird diversity in the country. It has more than 600 bird species. Meanwhile, the State Wildlife Department is also holding preparations to hold its bi-annual census in May end.. Significantly, the bi-annual census of wild animals of the State was slated to take place in 2007 but was delayed due to the tiger census in the country.</p>
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535	16	11-Jan-08	THE HINDU	Rare dolphin species spotted in Harike lake	<p>A high-level team of the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) has suggested an in-depth study to ascertain the circumstances that preceded the spotting of six rare freshwater dolphins in the lake upstream of the Harike barrage at the confluence of the Sutlej and Beas rivers in Punjab. The WWF team of experts, led by Senior Co-ordinator of the Freshwater and Wetlands Programme, Sandeep Behera, making a presentation to Punjab Forest and Wildlife Minister Tikshan Sud confirmed that the rare species of the aquatic mammal spotted by Divisional Forest Officer Basanta Rajkumar was indeed Platanista gangetica, a freshwater dolphin found in the Indus Gangetic river system. Popularly referred to as Bhuland or Bhulan, this completely blind yet sensitive animal that depends on a highly developed echo-locator system was first put under the protected list during the rule of Emperor Ashok and finds reference in the historic Babarnama. Though the European wildlife expert John Anderson reported in 1878 that the playful mammal was seen in abundance in most rivers flowing from the Himalayas, it became rare as development and commercial fishing changed the nature of their habitat. While villagers along the Sutlej and the Beas are quoted as having confirmed that they had never seen a Bhuland for the last three decades or so, on December 21, 2007, Rajkumar reported the spotting of two dolphins during a routine patrol. Subsequent investigations by the WWF team have established the presence of at least six specimens in the Harike lake, which is among the top Ramsar sites worldwide, being a major winter nesting site for thousands of rare migratory birds. The presence of the dolphins there has sent a wave of excitement among the wildlife experts globally.. Freshwater dolphins swim in some of the worlds mightiest rivers, including the Ganga, Indus, Yangtze and Amazon. The WWF has suggested that till a detailed conservation action plan is formulated, the Punjab Government must initiate a campaign to promote</p>
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536	16	13-Jan-08	INDIAN EXPRESS	India pushes for joint projects on climate change, Himalayan ecology with China	NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12: In the first tentative steps towards engaging China on the sensitive question of sharing information on the fragile Himalayan ecology, India is pushing for joint projects on earthquake research and disaster management. The issue will come up in the conversations Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will have with Chinas top political leadership on Monday during his three-day official visit starting Sunday. Efforts are underway to reflect this in the joint declaration at the culmination of the visit. According to sources, this would broaden the scope from just sharing hydrological and flood season data of Himalayan Rivers essentially the Brahmaputra and Sutlej. India has been taken by surprise on more than one occasion on environmental issues related to Himalayan ecology largely due to lack of information from the Chinese side. There are positive indications from Beijing that it is, in principle, willing to work on joint projects in earthquake management and climate change. A better understanding of the Himalayan ecology on the Chinese side is crucial for India as many rivers originate from there. The Western Himalayas are in the sensitive seismic zone and hectic Chinese developmental activity has impact on the fragile Himalayan ecology. The government, however, is aware of Chinas tendency to delay matters in implementing such cooperation. For instance, it was agreed over a year ago to set up an expert committee to share data on the Sutlej, Brahmaputra and Lohit rivers but so far only one introductory meeting has taken place. In fact, China did not name its representative for several months and it took prodding at the political level for the meeting to convene. Top officials indicate that China has always been reluctant to cooperate on ecological issues relating to the Himalayas as it boils down in many cases to the region around the Tibetan plateau which has political overtones for Beijing.
537	16	5-Mar-08	THE PIONEER	Himalaya Yatra for Ganga conservation a success'	Gopal Mani who led the Gau Ganga Himalaya Yatra to save the Ganga from pollution has pledged to continue with his tirade for the safeguard of the holy river. Interacting with mediapersons, Gopal Mani said the Gau Ganga Himalaya Yatra meant to generate awareness in the society towards ganga conservation has been a big success.He said the yatra started from Gangotri on Feb 11 and concluded at Ramlila Maidan Delhi on Feb 29. "At Delhi we had an opportunity to meet the President and put before the aims and objective of the yatra", he pointed out. He expressed his concern over Gangotri glacier being fast turning into a picnic spot. "The religious sanctity of Gangotri, the origin of Ganga must be maintained at all costs", he observed. Mani also conveyed his concern for the cow asserting that the very existence of the animal is at stake

538	16	3-Apr-08	THE HINDU	Majority of Darjeeling tea to go organic	<p>The Darjeeling Tea Association (DTA) has mounted efforts to increase the production of organic tea so that the majority of the champagne of teas is organically produced by 2010. Industry sources say that at present about 37 per cent of the total crop grown on the slopes of the eastern Himalayas is organic tea, as per certifications given by European and Japanese agencies. Efforts are on now to cover at least two more gardens that contribute 13 per cent of the total yield under the organic cultivation norms, a source at the DTA, the apex industry body, told The Hindu. Given the fact that the annual Darjeeling tea crop averages at about 9.5 to 10 million kg in volume terms, India would be offering around five million kg of the brew as an organically grown product. However, initially the crop would be lower as the conversion process reduces output by half. It takes about three years to convert a garden from conventional plantation to an organic one. This involves not only a total ban on chemical fertilizers and pesticides but there are also restrictions on the use of some natural items. For instance, use of tobacco extracts for pest control, is not allowed, sources said. Pointing out that the movement on organic production of teas started about 15 years ago, the sources said that at that time it commanded a huge premium in the international market with some of them selling at Rs. 10,000 a kg. Japan and Germany were two of the biggest markets for organic Darjeeling tea although the U.K. and the U.S. have also been buying this tea.. At present the queen of brews is grown over an area spanning 7,500 hectares in the Darjeeling district in West Bengal with some of the gardens sprawling across steep slopes sometime at a height of 6,500 feet. There are now 87 tea estates growing Darjeeling tea. However, there is little scope for increasing the output substantially although there is a huge global demand now for teas, especially premium varieties.</p>
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561	16	13-Oct-08	BBC NEPALI SERVICE	Recent flood events in Nepal, India and Bangladesh that displaced millions have stoked fears that defences along rivers in the region may not withstand climate change-induced floods, and could result in bigger catastrophes	Experts say many infrastructures are becoming weaker while the rivers' flows are getting stronger - a classic setting for projected climate change calamities. Most floods this year were monsoon-related and many would argue they had nothing to do with changes in the climate. However, the Kosi disaster in eastern Nepal that left millions of Nepalese and Indians homeless was a different story altogether. The devastation was the result of human mistakes. The embankment along the Kosi was not properly maintained, resulting in it being overrun by the meandering river even when there was no flood. The event has forced experts to imagine what could happen if rivers like the Kosi swell as the projected impacts of climate change take hold. "It is entirely possible that some of the existing structures could prove inadequate and possibly dangerous," said Rajendra Pachauri, head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). "They might not be able to withstand higher frequency and intensity of floods in the region," he told the BBC.
562	16	November 25, 2008	MICHAEL REILLY	Tibetan glaciers rapidly melting	Glaciers high in the Himalayas are dwindling faster than anyone thought, putting nearly a billion people living in South Asia in peril of losing their water supply. Throughout India, China, and Nepal, some 15,000 glaciers speckle the Tibetan Plateau. There, perched in thin, frigid air up to 7200 metres above sea level, the ice might seem secluded from the effects of global warming.

563	16	July 27, 2008	THE PIONEER	Bahuguna demands special policy for Himalayan region	Famous environmental activist Sunder lal Bahuguna and Tehri MLA Kishore Upadhyaya submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh demanding a special policy for the Himalayan region that extends through different States of India. In which they have mentioned that there is need for controlling human activities disguised as development work which are having a negative effect on the environment in the Himalayan region, especially in Uttarakhand. The PM has assured the memorandum signatories that the issue of consolidating environment preservation and development would be raised in the Parliament.. Upadhyay said that the memorandum emphasised on the role of Himalayas as permanent water reservoir for many Indian States. The environmental wealth in the mountains of Uttarakhand is suffering serious damage due to improper implementation of development works.The MLA said that the letter submitted to the PM calls for formulation of comprehensive Himalayan policy that should address all the States of the Himalayan region.
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564	16	20-Oct-08	KALYAN RAY, DH NEWS SERVICE, NEW DELHI	Pollution clouds over Himalayas	<p>The aerosol cloud was caused by air pollution in Nepal, India, Pakistan and Western China, researchers said. Though scientists have spotted similar aerosol clouds over the Arabian Sea and Gangetic plains in the past, for the first time these ultra-fine dust particles have been spotted at the pristine Himalayan heights. French and Italian researchers analysed the air for dust particles at an altitude of 5079 meters (about 3.1 miles) in Nepals Khumbu valley. For comparison, Mount Everests height is 8848 meters. These high altitude particles might alter the atmospheric balance of heat and affect the yearly monsoon cycle in South East Asia. With sizes ranging from 10-80 nanometres (one nanometre equals one billionth of a meter), these particles directly absorb sunlight causing warming of the lower atmosphere (troposphere). The scientists have discovered two types of particles those transported to the valley (with size of around 80 nanometres) from India, Pakistan, China and Bangladesh and those formed directly in the valley due to photochemical processes (with an average size of less than 10 nanometre). Aerosol clouds are at the core of a global debate on the contributions of South East Asia in global warming. Scientists reported that the combined effect of aerosols and global warming can lead to a temperature rise of 0.25 degrees celsius every decade sufficient to account for glacier retreat in the high altitude Himalayas which are directly affected by the aerosols.</p>
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565	16	October 21, 2008	PTI	Himalayan glaciers receding at a faster rate: IMD head	Glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than in any other part of the world and if this continues, there is likelihood of their disappearing by the year 2035 and perhaps sooner if the earth keeps warming at the current rate, Ajit Tyagi, Director General of Indian Meteorological Department warned on Monday. Addressing a one-day workshop held by Meteorological Centre Shimla, Tyagi said 15,000 Himalayan glaciers form a unique reservoir which supports perennial rivers such as the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra which in turn are the lifeline of millions of the people in South Asian countries. He said the current melting glaciers indicate that the Ganga, Indus, Brahmaputra and other rivers that criss-cross northern Indian plain could turn seasonal in near future. Tyagi said the department would soon set up a radar in Shimla and quality weather forecast would be available to the people a week in advance.
566	16	November 27, 2008	IANS	We must protect Himalayas: PM	Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said for mobilising "all our resources to protect the Himalayas" from the threat of environmental damage. IMF has also been involved in environment protection works in the Himalayas," Manmohan Singh said after releasing a special postal cover for the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) as part of its Golden Jubilee Celebrations here. "There is no greater service the IMF can do to its cause than by working for the preservation of the Himalayan ecology and the environment of the Himalayas," the prime minister said. "It is a matter of deep concern that the Himalayas are being threatened by climate change. The Himalayan eco-system supports the largest concentration of glaciers outside the polar regions," Manmohan Singh noted. He further said, "There is evidence that the Himalayan glaciers are receding but studies have so far been inconclusive on the extent of change and whether climate change is a significant contributory factor. We must take all precautionary measures so that the danger, which lurks in the background, does not materialize.

567	16	December 2008	6, BBC WORLD SERVICE	The Hindu-Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region in South Asia has remained a nagging gap in the global climate change knowledge bank	<p>In the absence of field studies and adequate data, the impact of global warming in the area stretching from Afghanistan in the west to Burma in the east is largely unknown. In effect, there has been virtually no climate change adaptation plan for the zone, which is ecologically hypersensitive, yet a vital natural service provider. Millions of people in the region, most of them poor ones who would be hardest hit by climate change, rely on these natural systems including river waters and forests. But if what experts and government officials from the region and international organisations have recently agreed on is translated into action, the crippling information gap could become a matter of the past. They have come up with a plan to first gather key information on the impacts of climate change in the region, and then chalk out responses. "At present the lack of basic environmental data for the Himalayan region is so serious that the IPCC, the world's apex body on climate change, says that the region is a white spot for data," say officials with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). ICIMOD is a Kathmandu-based international organisation that together with UNESCO recently organised a meeting for the initiative. "The meeting discussed ways of systematically gathering and sharing the information needed, developing a reliable picture of the present situation, and formulating approaches to respond," they say.</p>
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568	16	December 25, 2008	AFP	Eastern Himalayan nations need common biodiversity strategy	<p>Sikkim Governor Balmiki Prasad Singh has called for creating common strategies among the biodiversity rich nations along the eastern Himalayan stretch. We need to have a common strategy both in use of biodiversity and conservation. It calls for constant sharing of information, exchanges of research findings, knowledge about traditional practices and institutional networking, said the Governor in his inaugural address at the international conference on Sub-regionalism approach to Regional Integration in South Asia: Prospects and Opportunities hosted by Sikkim University here today. Singh, who is also the Chief Rector of the University, added that the entire region of Eastern Himalaya is one of the most globally recognized bio-diversity hotspots. Speaking on the theme of regional integration, the Governor offered tourism as an instrument in injecting such integration and cross border exchange. With the contrasting features that we find in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, China and Thailand, tourism could be a major economic intervention that would really foster regional economic cooperation, he said.</p>
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569	16	December 26, 2008	AFP	Himalayan villagers on global warming frontline	<p>Temperatures in the Himalayas are rising by around 0.06 degrees Celsius (0.108 Fahrenheit) annually, according to a long-term study by the Nepalese department of hydrology. The rate is far above the global average given last year by the UN's senior scientists, who said surface temperatures have risen by a total of 0.74 degrees C over the past 100 years. On top of unpredictable weather; other dangers are increasing in Nepal's mountains because of climate change. When the pressure becomes too great, the lake walls burst and release millions of cubic tonnes of water that can wash away people, villages and arable land. Researchers at the Nepal-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) have said five major glacial lake floods have hit Nepal since 1970, as well as at least two in Tibet and one in Bhutan. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) calculates there are 2,000 glacial lakes forming in Nepal and around 20 are in danger of bursting. Himalayan snow and ice is a massive freshwater reserve that feeds nine of Asia's major waterways, including the Indus, Ganges and Yellow rivers. "In the long term, water scarcity will become a big problem," said Sandeep Chamling Rai, WWF climate change officer. "There will eventually be a tipping point where the amount of water from the glaciers is hugely reduced, which will result in loss of water resources for people downstream who rely on these Himalayan-fed rivers."</p>
582	17	21-Jan-09	THE HINDU	Electric fences along forest boundaries	<p>DEHRA DUN: The Chief Wildlife Warden of Uttarakhand, Srikant Chandola, has ordered installation of electric fences along the forest boundaries of Katarpur, Ajeetpur and Missarpur villages in Haridwar district to prevent elephants from entering rural habitats and damaging life and property of villagers. Only this past week a rampaging elephant had killed one person and seriously injured three in Katarpur village. Mr. Chandola called on the victims family and assured all possible help. The elephant menace plagues most villages in the Haridwar and Rishikesh region as the pachyderms take to raiding crops and killing and injuring those who try to push them back into the forests.</p>

583	17	8-Feb-09	THE HINDU	Himachal proposes an Environment	NEW DELHI: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal on Saturday announced that his government would come up with a separate new Environment Master Plan. It has already instituted an environmental impact study of all major development projects, particularly hydro-power projects, to study their impact on the environment and how best to deal with the emerging scenario. Sharing his views at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2009 organized by TERI here, Mr. Dhumal, departing from prepared text, said his government was also seriously considering instituting a study on the status of glaciers in the Himalayan region in view of the climatic change challenges. My government will soon organize a national level seminar on the Status of Glaciers with other Himalayan States to discuss the issue threadbare. The States per capita carbon footprint has been assessed at 0.4 tonnes in comparison to the national average of 1.05 tonnes.
584	17	2-Mar-09	THE TRIBUNE	Rs. 1.26 crore for snow leopard	A sum of Rs 1.26 crore has been earmarked by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests under the current annual plan for project snow leopard in the state. The project not restricted to the protected areas (national parks and wildlife sanctuaries) will extend all over the landscape to be implemented with the active involvement of local communities. Snow leopard is a globally endangered species as well as the most important flagship species of the mountainous regions of J&K, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Poached for their attractive fur, organs and bones there are roughly just 4,500 to 7,000 snow leopards left in the world. India is home to approximately 400 to 600 snow leopards of which 60 per cent are found in Ladakh alone. These are nearly 26 protected areas in the Himalayan landscape where snow leopard is reported.

585	17	4-Mar-09	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Global warming effects hit tourism	<p>GANGTOK, Sikkim tourism has not been spared from the effects of global warming. The Travel Agents Association of Sikkim had planned to organize skiing in the State to promote adventure tourism and winter tourism, but failed in their bid because of poor snowfall in recent months. We had planned skiing sports at Kupup near Nathu-La border and Yumthang in West district to attract the tourists in winter season, the off-season for the States tourism business in January and February. But that could not be materialized as there are no snowfalls in the State in this season, Palzor Lachungpa, president of the association said. There was no snow fall throughout January and February, so we have kept in abeyance this training programme, Lachungpa said, adding that their last hope is only March month and if there is no snowfall, they would not hold the training programme. Lachungpa, however, said the poor snowfall is not only in the State but Himachal Pradesh tourism has also been affected by climate change.</p>
586	17	12-Mar-09	THE HINDU	Eco-activists pitch in to save Ganga,	<p>NEW DELHI: Eco-activists campaigning to save the troubled Ganga and the Himalayas have decided to turn to the Mahatma for mobilizing mass awareness and public support for their cause. They are organizing a day-long programme this Thursday -- the 79th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhis Dandi March -- to pressurize the Government and administrators to take time-bound decisive steps to save both the eco-systems. A panel discussion on Save Ganga and save Himalayas will be organized at Raj Ghat to evaluate the steps being taken to ensure protection of what is considered a part of Indias cultural and spiritual heritage. The campaigners, who want to meet the Prime Minister, will also push for implementation of the 10-point charter of demands that was submitted to him in 2006. The list of demands includes suspension of dam construction activities in the Uttarakhand part of the Ganga that disturb the natural flow-regime and ecology. The charter also calls for making the Ganga and its tributaries free from pollution completely and permanently within the first decade of the 21st Century.</p>

587	17	23-Mar-09	THE TRIBUNE	Himalaya Bachao Rally on April 9	<p>The Himalaya Niti Abhiyan Samiti, a forum of non-governmental organizations, has decided to organise Himalaya Bachao Rally on April 9 at Bilaspur to put pressure on political parties to adopt a new environment-friendly and pro-people development model. Coordinator of the samiti Guman Singh said prominent environmentalists like Sunder Lal Bahuguna, Medha Patkar and Ashok Chaudhary were likely to participate in the rally. The objective was to highlight the problems being faced by the local people due to the setting up of hydroelectric projects, cement plants, special economic zones and indiscriminate mining and urbanization. It would be followed by a two-day conference to evolve a new model for ensuring environmentally sustainable development of hills. He said the focus would be on mega projects like the Bhakra Dam and various ongoing hydroelectric projects in Kinnaur, upcoming cement plants at Sundernagar and Baga, Himalayan Ski Village at Manali, industrial hub at Nalagarh and the proposed SEZ at Gagret.</p>
588	17	11-Apr-09	THE TRIBUNE	Environment yet to become	<p>With his Chipko movement in Tehri ensuring a complete ban on felling of trees, Sunder Lal Bahuguna says environment is yet to emerge as an important political issue, resulting in a complete go by to environmental safeguards in development process. Bahuguna has now thrown his might behind the Himalaya Niti Abhiyan, a group of about two dozen action committees from Himachal who are protesting against displacement of people due to the coming up of power projects, cement plants, SEZ and ski village. He is here to attend the Himalaya Bachao campaign and pledge his support to those fighting for sustainable development.</p>

589	17	1-May-09	THE ASSAM TRIBUNE	Bamboo can be used to reduce	<p>Bamboo is a dominant species among the spectacular floral diversity of the region and is also a part and parcel of the regions culture. Out of 136 species of bamboos found in India, 63 species in 22 genera are found in Northeast India of which 25 species of bamboo are considered to be rare. Bamboo is known to have an unrivalled utility with its use in hundreds of different purposes. People in the region heavily depend on bamboos for various domestic and agricultural purposes. A range of handicraft materials are prepared from specific bamboos usually cultivated by the people. This species can rightly be termed as green gold owing to some tremendous potential which is yet to be discovered completely and used. Being one of the most productive and fastest growing species, bamboo can grow sometimes up to 1.2 m a day and thus is a good storage of carbon dioxide. Its biomass production and carbon assimilation may be 7-30% higher than that of fast growing woody species according to researches conducted. This fast growing character can also be exploited to a large extent by using the species for re-greening of degradable lands. Extensive use of bamboo for construction purposes may result in saving our gradually declining forest resources which is of utmost importance.</p>
590	17	9-May-09	THE PIONEER	Uttarakhand Govt. to restore forest cover on 30,000 hectares	<p>In view of recent devastating forest fires in the State, the Uttarakhand Government will undertake afforestation on 30,000 hectares of land. Approximately 3.56 hectares of forest cover has been depleted in fires so far this year. Twenty lakh trees including 12 lakh eucalyptus, 1.2 lakh poplar and over six lakh other varieties would be planted along Terai central division. Plantation is an ongoing process. We conduct forest conservation exercises under various programmes like National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes, Chief Conservator (Environment) AR Sinha said. There are also some job-oriented programmes like bamboo plantation in the State, he added.</p>

591	17	5-Jun-09	TIMES OF INDIA	Pre-monsoon showers save Uttarakhand from forest fires	DEHRA DUN: Pre-monsoon showers have brought the much-needed relief from forest fire in Uttarakhand, which has lost over 3,500 hectare of its green cover in several areas including its famous tiger reserves in over 1,400 incidents of fire this summer. Forest officials said no major fire incident has been reported during the past fortnight as the pre-monsoon rains have cooled the hill state during the period. "The forest fires have come to zero level," said R B S Rawat, Uttarakhand Principal Chief Forest Conservator. A total of ten people were killed and 15 others, including nine forest personnel, were injured in the various incidents of fire. Forest fires are mainly caused by rising temperature in jungles due to which tree leaves especially those belonging to pines become dry and catch fire.
592	17	5-Jun-09	TIMES OF INDIA	Nation celebrates World Environment Day	NEW DELHI: The nation will commemorate the World Environment Day on Friday along with all the nations of the World. The World Environment Day is being celebrated since 1974 every year. The theme this year reflects the urgency for nations to take adaptation and mitigation measures to address climate change consistence with the policy of sustainable development and reach agreed outcomes at the crucial climate convention meeting slated in Copenhagen in December 2009. The day has been marked by the United Nations to observe as World Environment Day to give a human face to environmental issues, empower to become agents of sustainable and equitable development, promote to change attitude regarding the environment and advocate partnership between each human being and each society to ensure a safer and more prospers future. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has organized a function where the President will give awards for conservation and preservation of environment, Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskars (IGPP), Young environmentalist of the year award- 2009 on this occasion. This environmental hero has been selected by the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) from the class 8th to 12th who often go unrecognized after competitions.

593	17	31-Jul-09	THE ECONOMIC TIMES	Villages in west Himalayas bearing the brunt of climate change	<p>With erratic snowfall, melting of small glaciers affecting water flow in the rivers coupled with a rise in temperature inducing and conducive conditions for invasion of insects, villages in the cold desert of Western Himalayas are bearing the brunt of climate change. The economically backward and deprived local communities have already started feeling the heat as water supply, agriculture-based livelihoods and infrastructures in the region face stress due to the global warming, thanks to the greenhouse gases emissions across the world. "Even though we cannot establish scientifically the changes in weather we can sense that its gradually becoming more warmer during summer in Lahaul and Spiti with temperature shooting up to even 30 degree Celsius as compared to 14 to 15 degrees Celsius a few years ago," says Rigzin Samphel, Zila Parishad Vice Chairman from a village in Lahaul on the Indo-Tibet border in Himachal Pradesh. "There is an acute water shortage as small glaciers are melting. The natural ponds have dried up and now we are depending on water sheds which is not sufficient to meet our agricultural needs," Samphel adds. Aziz Mir, retired senior scientist from Leh echoes similar sentiments. "We are witnessing a lot of environmental changes. There is no heavy rainfall which we used to witness a few years ago, glaciers such as Khurdang have vanished in front of our eyes."</p>
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594	17	3-Aug-09	THE DECCAN HERALD	India, China to cooperate over Himalayan glaciers: Jairam	<p>India and China are in talks to monitor the melting of glaciers in the Himalayas, a border region crucial to both countries' water supplies, Minister for Environment Jairam Ramesh has said. "We are talking to the Chinese about monitoring the Himalayan glaciers," Ramesh told the Financial Times. However, he said India would not allow Chinese scientists "to climb all over India's glaciers" but wanted a collaborative research programme. He said as part of a scientific investigation into the health of what are called the 'Water Towers of Asia', academic research bodies on both sides of the mountain range would share information. He said New Delhi is open to dialogue on water resources with Beijing, adding the two countries shared the concerns. Ramesh is visiting China this month to strike a deal with Beijing ahead of the Copenhagen talks on climate change in December. He said India and China could be a "countervailing power" in resisting legally binding caps on greenhouse emissions that threaten to slow the progress of the two fastest growing economies. The Himalayan region and the Tibet plateau are strategically sensitive for the two countries. Seven of the world's greatest rivers, including the Ganges and the Yangtze, are fed by glaciers, and supply water to about 40 per cent of the world's population. The Financial Times' report said the Indian government has disputed the "doomsday predictions" linking melting of Himalayan glaciers to climate change, saying there is no evidence to support that glaciers will disappear within 40 years. Indian government has requested that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the department of science and technology undertake extensive glacial surveys across the eastern and western Himalayas to assess their condition.</p>
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595	17	30-Aug-09	THE HINDU	Joint research on Himalayan glaciers	<p>India and China will jointly conduct research on the impact of global warming on glaciers in the Himalayan and Tibetan regions; Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh said on Saturday. There is a need for a joint study on the glaciers in the regions. The Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology and its Chinese counterpart, the Cold and Arid Regions Environmental and Engineering Research, have been roped in to conduct the research, Mr. Ramesh said. The decision was taken last week during his visit to Beijing, the Minister said on the sidelines of a function after releasing a report, the Security Implication of Climate Change for India, prepared by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. Mr. Ramesh said it was mind-boggling to know the way China has invested heavily both monetary and resource wise to study glaciology in the Himalayan region in the past ten years. We are just beginning. A joint research will be better for in-depth findings. he said. Besides seeking joint research with the neighbouring countries, he emphasised on strengthening scientific capabilities of the institutions to combat the climate change threat.</p>
596	17	2-Sep-09	THE TRIBUNE	Sundarlal Bahuguna kicks off save-Himalaya campaign	<p>Renowned environmentalist Sundarlal Bahuguna here today launched his campaign to protect the environment in Himalayan states and gave 3As mantra to people to stop glaciers from decline and fight global warming. Austerity, afforestation and alternatives to industries and crops depending heavily upon water were required to reverse the damages the environment had suffered due to dams, felling of trees and increasing human intervention in nature, Bahuguna, much feted for his chipko movement to save trees in Uttarakhand, told mediapersons. Bestowed with Padma Vibhushan, Bahuguna said Gangotri, the glacier feeding the Ganges, was not even half of its former size and it had resulted in the receding water level in countrys rivers. He touched upon the issue of rising temperature in Kashmir, which witnessed rather hot summer this year with temperature hovering above the normal, and poor condition of water bodies I will travel across all Himalayan states so that we could set our agenda before taking up issues with the government.</p>

597	17	3-Sep-09	THE HINDU	Himalayan ecology deteriorating dangerously: Bahuguna	Chipko Movement founder Sundar Lal Bahuguna has expressed concern over the depleting water resources in the Himalayas and called for concrete steps to protect them from further damage. Kick-starting his Save Himalaya campaign here on Wednesday, Mr. Bahuguna appealed to the people to save the pristine resources which, he said, were under a grave threat and if something is not done now, it will be difficult to save them. Austerity, alternative resources and afforestation were the best ways to save the environment. We have to save [the] Himalayas for safeguarding water resources for our progeny. They will otherwise curse us. But the youth and the media also have a role to play. During his two-day visit here, the veteran activist met various people including Governor N. N. Vohra and Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand. He said climate change had not spared Kashmir. The threat was visible in significant weather changes. A leading environmentalist, Mr. Bahuguna has fought for preservation of forests in the Himalayas for years together, first as a member of the Chipko movement in the 1970s, and later by spearheading the Anti-Tehri Dam movement, which began in the 1980s, till early 2004. Now, Mr. Bahuguna is leading the group Save Himalayas which will travel to all Himalayan States and neighbouring countries to hold consultations with the heads of governments, eminent citizens, the media and civil society groups, in a bid to initiate fresh dialogue on nature, livelihood and environmental responsibilities.
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598	17	4-Sep-09	TIMES OF INDIA	Himalayas hotspot of climate change	<p>It's 4,000 miles of mountains, seas and valleys from Kathmandu to Copenhagen. With changing climate, it could well become 4,000 miles of sudden storms, flood and climate migrations. Recognizing that nations need to pool resources and expertise to face climate change impacts, South Asian countries came together for the first time earlier this week for a climate mini-summit in Kathmandu ahead of the Copenhagen meet in December. Himalayan ecosystems are 'the hotspots'. That's the message from the two-day South Asian Regional Climate Change Conference. The mighty Himalayas are acutely vulnerable to climate change. "The Himalayas have been warming three times as fast as the world average and their glaciers are shrinking more rapidly than anywhere else and could disappear by 2035. As the source of most of the region's major rivers, changes in Himalayan ecosystems can drastically alter the lives of more than the 700 million who live in the region. Lesser snow and fast-shrinking glaciers mean rivers becoming trickles and effectively India, Nepal and Bangladesh's water sources drying up. At the same time, coastal areas like Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are threatened by rising seas levels. While most climate summits gear towards ways to reduce carbon emissions and related negotiations, this one was an attempt to see how local communities must be helped to deal with the impact of climate change. "The Copenhagen summit is a different issue. Here, we looked at a synergistic approach to enhance ability of communities to cope with changing climate," said joint secretary R R Rashmi, of the ministry of environment and forests in the Indian government.</p>
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599	17	11-Sep-09	THE TRIBUNE	Bahuguna begins mission to save dying Himalayas	<p>Chipko movement leader Sunder Lal Bahuguna, who has now embarked on his second mission to save the dying Himalayas. The 82-year-old renowned eco-activist, who undertook a 4,870 km padyatra from Kashmir to Kohima during the Chipko Movement to save trees three decades ago, is on the move again. He, along with some other activists, launched a fresh campaign from Kashmir to create public opinion in favour of a long-term policy for sustainable development of the Himalayan region. The mighty Himalayas, which sustain life in the region, is gasping for breath. Mindless development activity has inflicted deep wounds on the mountain ranges, causing both ecological and aesthetic degradation, he said. If the government failed to take immediate steps to review the environmentally destructive development policy or a comprehensive Himalayan policy was put in place to enhance the life-sustaining elements, the countrys biggest natural resource will be lost forever, leaving a host of intractable problems for posterity, Bahuguna, who was in the city today, told The Tribune. Hiamchal Pradesh is the second state he is visiting under the Save Himalaya campaign after J&K. He will not only cover all 10 states of the country, but also plans to extend the campaign to other Himalayan countries, right from Afghanistan to Myanmar and even China. Forests should be seen and developed as carbon sinks and perennial sources of water.</p>
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600	17	30-Sep-09	THE DECCAN HERALD	Himalayan glaciers grew when Asia was hotter	Most other Central Asian glaciers retreated under the same heat spell, some 9,000 years ago, but the Himalayan glaciers lengthened from one to six kilometres. A new study by Brigham Young University (BYU) geologist Summer Rupper pieces together the chain of events surrounding the unexpected glacial growth. "Stronger monsoons were thought to be responsible," said Rupper. "Our research indicates that the extra snowfall from monsoonal effects can only take credit for up to 30 percent of the glacial advance." As Central Asias summer climate warmed as much as six degrees Celsius, shifting weather patterns brought more clouds to the Southeast Himalayas. Temperatures also dropped when higher winds spurred more evaporation in this typically humid area, the same process behind household swamp coolers. The story of these seemingly anomalous glaciers underscores the important distinction between the terms climate change and global warming". Even when average temperatures are clearly rising regionally or globally, what happens in any given location depends on the exact dynamics of that place, Rupper said. The findings come from a framework Rupper developed as an alternative to the notion that glaciers form and melt in direct proportion to temperature, said a BYU release. These findings are slated for publication in the September issue of the Quaternary Research.
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601	17	6-Oct-09	TIMES OF INDIA	Clouds of soot melting glaciers in Himalayas and Tibetan plateau	<p>In a new research, scientists in India and China have determined that glaciers in the Himalayas and the Tibetan plateau that feed the river systems of almost half the world's people are melting faster because of the effects of clouds of soot from diesel fumes and wood fires. According to a report in the Guardian, the results of the research, to be announced this month in Kashmir, show for the first time that clouds of soot - made up of tiny particles of "black carbon" emitted from old diesel engines and from cooking with wood, crop waste or cow dung - are "unequivocally having an impact on glacial melting" in the Himalayas. Scientists said that while the threat of carbon dioxide (CO2) to global warming has been accepted, soot from developing countries is a largely unappreciated cause of rising temperatures. Once the black carbon lands on glaciers, it absorbs sunlight that would otherwise be reflected by the snow, leading to melting. "This is a huge problem which we are ignoring," said Professor Syed Hasnain of the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in Delhi. "We are finding concentrations of black carbon in the Himalayas in what are supposed to be pristine, untouched environments," he added. The institute has set up two sensors in the Himalayas, one on the Kholai glacier that sits on the mountain range's western flank in Kashmir and the other flowing through the eastern reaches in Sikkim. Glaciers in this region feed most of the major rivers in Asia. India and China produce about a third of the world's black carbon, and both countries have been slow to act. "India is the worst. In Delhi, no government agency has put any sensors on the ground. Teri is doing it by ourselves," he said. Controlling traffic in the Himalayan region should help ease the harm done by emissions from diesel engines.</p>
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602	17	27-Oct-09	THE DECCAN HERALD	PM for greater coordination with neighbours to save Himalayas	<p>Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gave in principle approval to the National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system and called for "much greater engagement and coordination" among nations including China and Pakistan, who share the sensitive mountain range. The approval to the mission assumes significance as India gears up for the climate change talks in Copenhagen in December to decide on a successor to the Kyoto Protocol to check global warming. The decision was taken at the meeting of the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change on the National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, where Singh said that he would convene a meeting of Chief Ministers of Himalayan states in an effort to safeguard the sensitive zone. While a large part of the Himalayan range lies within Indian territory, other countries -- Nepal, Bhutan, China and Pakistan -- share the mountain ranges with India, he said. "Any comprehensive Climate Change Action Plan for the entire Himalayan zone will, of course, require coordinated action among all stakeholder countries," Singh said. Noting that some bilateral initiatives were being taken with China and Bhutan, he said "we have to recognise the need for much greater engagement and coordination with all our neighbours which share the Himalayas. The National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem will endeavour to find out the extent of the receding of glaciers and suggest ways to address the problem. "We have anecdotal evidence that glaciers may be receding, but we need precise and carefully vetted data, both through satellite imaging and ground surveys," Singh said. He also welcomed the initiative taken by the Ministry of Environment and Forest to commission a study on Himalayan glaciers in collaboration with ISRO.</p>
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603	17	10-Dec-09	THE ECONOMIC TIMES	Recession of Himalayan glaciers part of natural process: Govt.	Environment minister Jairam Ramesh said the recession of Himalayan glaciers was part of the natural cyclical process, which could be attributed to various reasons including global warming. Replying to supplementaries during Question Hour, he said the melting of Arctic ice and Himalayan glaciers could not be compared as ecological conditions in each case were different. According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Himalayan Glaciers are receding faster than in any part of the world and if the present rate continues, there is a likelihood of their disappearing by 2035, he noted. However, Ramesh said the studies carried out by the Geological Survey of India have revealed that majority of Himalayan glaciers are passing through a phase of recession, which is a worldwide phenomenon. "The recession of glaciers is part of the natural cyclic process of changes in the size and other attributes of the glaciers. These changes could be attributed to various reasons including global warming," he said. Ramesh said no studies have been conducted on the immediate impact of recession of glaciers on the ecology. He said long term studies are required to conclusively establish the causes and impacts of melting of Himalayan glaciers.
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