

The Himalayas will not live long

If Global Warming is not significantly reduced

When the world celebrated the 50 anniversary of the first successful ascent of Mount Everest in 2003, it beckoned many adventurers to conquer the might of Mount Everest. But at the same time, research alarmed about the disasters of Global Warming to the Himalayan range, including the Mount Everest. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) warned that climate change could bring worst possible adversity to the one world's oldest mountain range.

Adding to the validity, the recently concluded Brussels meet by the International Panel on Climate change drafted a technical summary on the hazards of Global warming, it clearly stated that if current warming rates are maintained, Himalayan glaciers could decay at very rapid rates, shrinking from the present 500,000 square kilometers to 100,000 square kilometers by 2030s. Among the ominous forecasts, the report also predicted that the melting of glaciers in the Himalayas would affect hundreds of millions of people.

There have already been reports about melting of glacial ice in the Himalayas. The Mount Everest, the world's third largest icecap, which is more than five thousand metres above sea level, is melting. As the glaciers in the area melt and contract, lakes are forming in their place. One of them is at the base of the melting Imja Glacier, which apparently did not exist 30 years ago, but now is one kilometre long and a hundred metres deep. Other findings have shown that in the Garhwal Himalayas there has been a glacial retreat at a record pace. The Dokriani Barnak Glacier in the region retreated 66 ft (20.1 m) in 1998 despite a severe winter. The Gangotri Glacier is retreating 98 ft (30 m) per year. The findings show that the glaciers in the Himalayas are retreating at an average rate of 50 feet (15 m) per year. Overall, the Himalayan region has warmed by about 1 C (1.8 F) since the 1970s.

The Himalayan Range has ushered and protected the subcontinent from harsh climates. The melting of this range will only worsen the dilemma of the people and annihilate its varied biodiversity. The Himalayan range is one, on the long list of disasters by global warming. It is for the local governments and people to decide of the future of the region and of them.

[Source: Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS), Newsletter March 2007 Issue]

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