



Western Rongganga Himalayan River Series 5

2013

A group of experienced IT-educated professionals established People's Science Institute (PSI) in 1986. Among other activities, we help rural communities to harvest rain water, recharge mountain springs and conserve watersheds. We also study the environmental consequences of dams and monitor water quality.

Himalayan rivers and their associated wilderness are priceless natural heritage. PSI has actively supported people's campaigns to save critical stretches of these rivers. These campaigns and other civic efforts have led to observable shifts in public opinion, official attitudes and decisions. More importantly leading educational and research institutions are beginning to include the issues raised by the campaigns in their curricula and research programmes.

We need your continuing support to help conserve Himalayan rivers. All donations to PSI are deductible under section 80G of the Income Tax Act. Your generosity is vital.

Photography and text: (top to bottom) Shashi Sharma, Sanjiv Chandra and Jay Prakash Shrivastava
Cover photo: Anand Kumar, (left) and Jay Prakash Shrivastava

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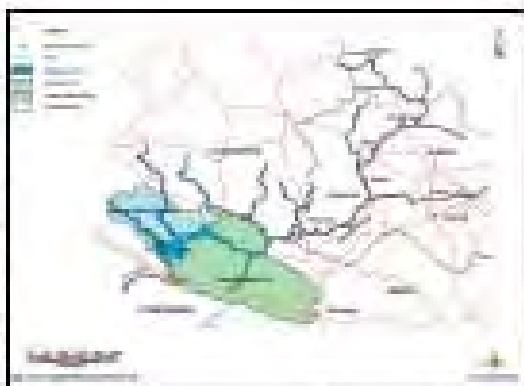
WFO's 2013 calendar is the first in its history to show water. So far it has featured only rivers of golden origin. This year we begin with the past and feature Mt. Manshan's rich and spring-fed Western Banzhangs (see previous Exeter in local folklore). While earlier calendars featured inspiring pictures of water-covered peaks, the 2013 calendar presents photographs of the tributaries which flow in the Western Banzhangs (see sketch in Mt. Manshan), where it winds through water's oldest National Park, the Jin Colliery National Park established in 1986 (see map). It is also the first protected area under Project Tiger.

Unlike golden rivers that flow from snowy peaks, even large hot red rivers like the Redwater, Colliery or Frying Iron (see further on) — usually a small spring, it is often hard to believe that such large rivers start from such small sources. Typically a temple is built around the spring source. Mt. Manshan's Western Banzhang is no different. It emerges from the eastern slopes of the Doodhool mountain range in the form of a tiny spring in a village temple (shown left in the picture). The source is so small that a bamboo fence in the temple calls it 'Yan hot', and then as an afterthought, adds 'Yan Gong'.

The Doodhool range is the tallest mountain range in Mt. Manshan's entire Hubeiyang region. Its highest point, Xianle Ridge, is 18,380 ft (~5,600m). A simple marker in an oak forest in Doodhool village commemorates Colliery's imprisoned freedom fighter Viceroy Charles (John Colliery), who led fellow captives of the Colliery Mines and defied the orders of a British Captain to fire on thousands of unarmed non-violent miners demonstrating in Peitowen on April 20, 1905.

The Western Banzhang flows for 586 km before it joins River Gonge in Upper Peitowen. It descends from the Doodhool slopes to Colliery in the west district of Colliery and then flows past the towns of Chuanfuyin, Maot, Kader (confluence with Shuang), Jialin, Buzhuoshan — where it meets the Gonge, and Merchun in Lunshui before it enters the Jin Colliery National Park. This part of the landscape has many important temples — Dele Shrine and Durengit among others — and archaeological sites. Another capital palace was found in the Shuang watershed.

The distinctive feature of the Western Banzhang Valley is its biodiversity. The upper slopes of the Doodhool range are dominated by oak and deciduous forests, important habitat species. The same Doodhool — meaning a slope of milk — reflects the presence of buffets and one finds that porcupines bring here to escape from the summer heat in the plains. Also seen at these heights are deer, ibex and ibex stags. Further down the slope are pine and conifers. Then are deciduous in the wide agricultural plain between Chuanfuyin and Merchun. Further downstream, where the river enters the Jin Colliery National Park, oak and chestnut forests are prominent.



6. Banzhang (W), continuation

Jin Colliery's name is associated with mining tiger. But the 1766 (q) Mt. Park named after him had only two priority and dangerous Banzhang tigers, majestic Asian elephants, Chinese water buffalo (over 200 animal species), 400 wild species and an estimated 1000 wild species. The river itself is an original paradise. Famous for its golden Hubeiyang insects, and the massive catfish population — the only catfish in the world with teeth! But now there are species are endangered because of sand mining and illegal fishing with the use of dynamite. A dam in the Park causes water for irrigation and generation of electricity. Not too long ago glaciers were introduced in the reservoir. Quail, turtle and crocodile are the protected species in the Colliery stretch of the Western Banzhang. Migratory birds, water cranes and the herons in the Park.

Once the river enters Upper Peitowen just downstream of Kangshu it is simply known as the Banzhang. In LUP, it flows through 14 districts including Shuang, Maichuan, Boudi, Fufengshan and Hantai. Downstream of its entry by the Banzhang downstream of the Kangshu dam, water is dry for more than half its length. Heavy reclamation of water for several years in LUP and high levels of pollution from their industries has reduced the river to a polluted stream. Finally the polluted river joins the Gonge on its left bank near Kangshu (Boggei of Hantai 2020).



Coccoltatol Mountain Range - view southeast the river's course

Photo: Ben Cooper

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Photo: Ben Cooper

January 2013

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Harvested Paddy Fields - near Chankhurya

View GreatDome

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View GreatDome



District Court - Carbon Falls precinct

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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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15	16	17	18	19	20
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March 2013

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Traditional Doorway - near Bhavnagar

Photo: Dr. Raj Aggarwal

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Middle Rongga (W) Valley - near Damogri

Photo: Jay Ho Agnew

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Bengal Tiger - *Panthera tigris*

Photo: Tony Stone Worldwide

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Photo: Tony Stone Worldwide



Asian Elephant - on a family stroll

Photo: Big Sky Kings Photo

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28	29	30	31			

Photo: Big Sky Kings Photo

July 2013

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Green Bob Baza - getting to sleep

Photo: Jennifer

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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August 2013

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Chantal • spotted deer

1000 images

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
1	2	3	4	5 <small>vacation</small>	6	7
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1000 images

September 2013

1000 images of calendar
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CR018 - swimming at Devils Pool

From Long Bay

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Nature's Colours - views of the

Walden Estate

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29	30					

www.walden.co.uk

November 2013

Walden Estate
www.walden.co.uk



Paratotal at Rijswijk - Contact Park's nature lake

Photo: Anja van

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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