

Survival Challenges for Vultures in India

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Why in News?

A recent study published in the Journal of Threatened Taxa highlighted electrocution from high-tension power infrastructure as an underreported threat to vultures.

- **Observation** - Relocating a livestock carcass dumping site 2.4 km away from hazardous power infrastructure at Sudhauwala, Dehradun, helped reduce vulture mortality.

About study

- **Location** - Sudhauwala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- Electrocution deaths about 46 vulture carcasses were recorded at the site.
- **Intervention** - Carcass dump relocated 2.4 km away in April 2015.
- **Result** - Vultures continued using the new site, with no mortality events recorded during limited post-relocation monitoring.
- Other raptors recorded at the relocated site included Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*) and Crested Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis cheela*).

*A **raptor** is a carnivorous bird of prey or a type of small-to-medium predatory dinosaur.*

Major Threats to Vultures

- Electrocution from power infrastructure
- Poisoning
- Veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- Food scarcity
- Habitat loss

Conservation Significance

- Vultures are long-lived scavengers and highly vulnerable to human-induced mortality.
- Relocating carcass dumps away from dangerous power infrastructure can be a simple, site-specific conservation measure.
- The Dehradun case demonstrates that managing the location of food sources can reduce interaction between vultures and hazardous power infrastructure.

Reference

[The Hindu| Survival Challenges for Vultures in India](#)

