



Haiderpur wetland in Uttar Pradesh is new Ramsar site

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MEERUT: India has designated the Haiderpur wetland, which is about 10 km from Bijnor, as the country's 47th Ramsar site and 2,463rd Ramsar site internationally. The Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change posted the information on Twitter on Thursday.

Ramsar is a wetland site designated under the Ramsar Convention, an intergovernmental environmental treaty established in 1971 by Unesco, which came into force in 1975. The convention was held in Ramsar, Iran, and hence the name. The convention facilitates national action plans and brings in international cooperation for the conservation of wetlands, along with wise sustainable use of their resources.

Haiderpur Wetland covers an area of 6,908 hectares and is situated on the Muzaffarnagar-Bijnor border in Uttar Pradesh. It was formed in 1984 by the construction of Madhya Ganga Barrage at the confluence of Solani and Ganga rivers and is a part of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.

A source of freshwater and groundwater recharge, Haiderpur Wetland supports a variety of plant species, and is home to numerous animals, including swamp deer, otters, gharial and fishing cat. It plays host to more than 300 species of birds, many of which come for wintering

Terming the Ramsar site designation as a boost to wetland conservation, Suresh Babu, WWF-India, director, rivers basins and water policy, said, "The work that has been initiated by UP forest division, district administration, WWF-India and others, gives us hope that Haiderpur can be a great model for wise use of wetland. We hope a community-led co-management approach will help enhance the health of Haiderpur wetland."

Former divisional commissioner of Saharanpur, Sanjay Kumar, under whom the wetland was developed into a tourist spot and opened formally on November 14, 2019, said Haiderpur is one of India's finest birding hotspots. "The bird species count jumped from 146 in July, 2019 to 324 now. It has one the largest congregations of Bar Headed goose, Greylag goose, Ruddy Shelduck and Ferruginous Pochard. Now, its a Ramsar site. This is a really great achievement for the wetland," said Kumar, who is currently finance secretary, UP government.

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