

Kabul Zoo Training Visit to Selected North Indian Zoos

R. Marimuthu*

Thanks to the North Carolina Zoo, Zoo Outreach Organization and SAZARC invited 3 senior staff of Kabul Zoo and two officers from Kabul Municipality to attend the 10th SAZARC conference in Nepal. Afterwards, on their way back to Kabul, through New Delhi, they could visit three important zoos of North India, the Central Zoo Authority and important sites. The North Carolina Zoo Fund for Kabul Zoo covered the entire cost of their conference and training tour. They visited the National Zoological Park, New Delhi, Allen Forest Zoological Park in Kanpur, UP, and Mahendra Chaudhury Zoological Park in Chhatbir, Punjab. They are Mr. Mahtabuddin Ahmadi, Advisor to Mayor of Kabul, Ms. Rahila Kohistani, Director of Culture, Mr. Azizgul Saqib, Director, Kabul Zoo; Dr. Abdul Qadir Bahawi, Veterinarian and Mr. Najibullah Nazary, Education Officer. The objective of the training was to impart further knowledge about basic zoo management, health management including preventative medicine, animal welfare measures and Zoo education, as well as to become acquainted with more people from the South Asian zoo community.

Monday, 29 November 2010- National Zoological Park, New Delhi

Of 200 captive animal facilities in India, this is the only zoo which is administered directly by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. The Afghan delegates visited Delhi Zoo on 29 November 2010. On their arrival at the zoo, Director of the Zoo Mr. Amitabh Agnihotri, IFS welcomed them and briefed about the zoo using the zoo's blue print to explain different areas of the zoo. He told them about the zoo history such as people involved in planning of the zoo. Carl Hagenbeck of Germany was engaged to set up a modern zoo in 1956 and he presented a general layout plan of waterways, roads & paths, animal enclosures and sewage system. After the construction and animal



Orientation by Mr. Agnihotri, I.F.S., Director, National Zoo precedent to a tour around the entire 250 acre facility.

National Zoo visitor vehicle takes the Kabul Zoo officials around the sprawling facility.



Food preparation for all the zoo animals is a daily task. Kabul Zoo officers observe and note down helpful tips for their own use.

*Education Officer, ZOO. marimuthu@zooreach.org



Najibullah Nazary, Education Officer for Kabul Zoo interacts with Riaz Ahmad Khan, Zoo Curator, Education, National Zoo



Dr. Panneerselvam explained all the tranquilizing equipments and gave chance to the guests to use them.



One of many beautiful views in the National Zoological Park - a lovely lake like water body surrounded by trees and attracting migratory birds.

the park was formally inaugurated on 1st November 1959. Agnihotri told about the total area, the animals, some breeding successes, modern enclosure designs, the need of enrichment at the enclosures, animal welfare measures and veterinary care. He also talked about the visitor circulation and amenities to the visitors.

Dr. N. Panneer Selvam, Veterinary Officer showed the layout of the Veterinary hospital and explained the routine veterinary aspects of the zoo. They toured the food store both dry and wet and saw the food preparation of herbivore animals and their ration of food. They learned about different animals' food ration and later the food chart, a copy of which was given to them. Then visited the meat shop, where the veterinarian explained how he examine the meat for quality and how they are cleaned before giving it to the animals. In the hospital there were boards installed with the details of individual animal's body temperature, heart and respiration rates, some of the animals male and female body weight, age of maturity in male and female, gestation period and life span of the animals which the Kabul Zoo group studied. Moving on to the quarantine area in the hospital, they learned about the quarantine procedures and saw some animals in the quarantine. They examined squeeze cages used for medication as well as transfer the animal from one place to another. From quarantine area they went to the excellent laboratory of Delhi zoo which has a full time technician who does regular health screens to identify the parasites. Lab activities and equipment used in the lab were explained. There also they put up a board with drawings of different parasitic egg of wild animals and hematological values of wild animals. This information is very useful for the Afghan team. Before leaving the hospital, the Afghan group wanted to have a demonstration on tranquilizing equipments especially using the gun. Dr. Panneerselvam explained all the tranquilizing equipments and gave chance to the guests to use them.

Mr. Riaz Ahmed Khan, Curator (Education) took the Afghan visitors to the interpretation centre and explained their education activities and programmes conducted by the education department year around. He described different age levels of students participated in their programmes and showed them the drawings done by students and photographs of wildlife photo contest. The interpretation centre has a touch table which has antlers of different deer species, preserved animals and other animal items with labels.

He also explained about enclosure designs, night shelter, signage, visitor amenities, enrichment, and upkeep of the animals during summer and winter. They visited the zoo lakes and saw the migratory birds. After the zoo visit was over, they went to the Purana Quila, the construction was carried out by a Afgan ruler Sher Shah Suri in ancient times who wrested the throne of Delhi from Mughal Emperor Humayun.

Tuesday, 30 November 2010-Kanpur Zoological Park, Uttar Pradesh

Kanpur Zoo is located in North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The zoological park was founded in the year 1968 in Allen Forest and opened to public in 1974. It was designed by Mr. N.D. Bachketi and run by Uttar Pradesh Forest Department.

Mr. Praveen Rao, Director gave a presentation on Kanpur Zoo, that includes the history of the zoo, area, animals at zoo, administration set up office and field, and various sections such as animal, veterinary, commissary, sanitation, garden, estate, power and water supply sections. He also talked about the manpower involved in these sections to run the zoo administration smoothly. He covered education and awareness. Veterinary care of animals includes preventive procedures like vaccinations of felines, canines, bears and bird as well as deworming of carnivores, omnivores and birds.

Mr. Rao gave the group a real zoo management education in cleaning of cages, enclosures, moats and tanks with bactericidal/viricidal chemicals and its time schedule for various zoo inmates. He also gave some tips other medications such as liquid paraffin injected in the felids to minimize the Hair Ball Syndrome, providing mineral supplements Vitamin A, D3, E and B Complex with amino acids once in a week for carnivores, spray of Delta Methrin 1.25% on the body surface for all canines, felines, and birds twice a year for ecto-parasite eradication.

He described how they do tilting the soil of the herbivore enclosures and sterilize with lime powder once in three months. He also explained how the food supplied to zoo inmates that is examined for freshness and quality, washed with fresh water and then Pottassium Permanganate solution and again washed with fresh water and maximum fat from the meat removed. He covered many more procedures. Then the visitors were taken around the zoo. They learned about different types of enclosures designs,

enrichments and the upkeep. They visited newly renovated rodent free food store, veterinary section Dr. U.C. Srivastava, Veterinary Officer explained about veterinarian role and demonstrated the tranquilizer equipments. In this round the director, veterinarian and other zoo staff answered the questions raised by the Afghan team. Dr. T. R. Pandey, Range Officer accompanied in this trip.



Afghan visitors admire the attractive Kanpur Zoo map which is understandable by any visitor, literate or not.



Director explained each and every feature of the zoo.



Azizgul Saqib, Director, Kabul Zoo takes questions from students about the Kabul Zoo.

**Thursday, 02 December 2010-
Mahendra Chaudhury
Zoological Park, Chhatbir,
Punjab**

The idea of having a modern zoological park in Punjab and establishing it near the capital city of Chandigarh was conceived in 1974 by Sh. Mahendra Chaudhary, the then Hon'ble Governor of Punjab. This was given shape in January 1974 by establishing a Zoological Park at Chhatbir Protected Forest on Chandigarh-Patiala road about 19 Km. from Chandigarh. The Zoological Park was opened to public on 13th April, 1977 and was named Mahendra Chaudhury Zoological Park. It is biggest Zoological Park in North-Western India and run by the Department of Forest & Wildlife Preservation, Punjab.

The Afghan delegates were warmly welcomed by Mr. Charchill Kumar IFS, Field Director of this zoo by offering flower bouquet and putting up welcome banners. Then Mr. Gurbaz Singh IFS, Chief Wildlife Warden of Punjab State welcomed the participants. After a formal welcome he gave useful tips of zoo animals by a presentation. He told about different animal's gestation & incubation periods, recorded age of the animals at the zoo, body temperature, respiration and heart rates, some anatomical and behavioural abnormalities and common terminology used to call the new born wild animals.

In another presentation Mr. Singh talked about the successful rescue and rehabilitation of Red Sand Boa (*Eryx johnii*) by his department of forests and wildlife preservation. On June 2010, a pair of red sand boa was rescued from smugglers in Ludhiana. A case was registered under Wildlife Protection Act 1972. Then the snakes were brought to the Chhatbir zoo awaiting decision of the court. One of the snakes gave birth to 37 babies and out of this they successfully reared 36. According to the court order the 36 babies were put back to the original habitat of this species by setting up a committee. The committee took immense effort to identify the area and release the animals back to the wild.



Mr. Charchill Kumar, Director of M.C. Zoological Park, Chhatbir welcomes the Kabul Zoo contingent with a bouquet to Mrs. Rahila, Director of Department of Culture, Kabul Municipality.



Staff of M.C. Zoological Park, Chhatbir all turned out to welcome the visitors from Kabul Zoo.



Mr. Kumar introduces M.C. Zoological Park, Chhatbir to Kabul Zoo contingent first by a detailed Power Point presentation.



An attractive message from the animals for Visitors to Chhatbir Zoo



Kabulians admiring the Chhatbir Zoo elephants.

Charchill Kumar described the zoo which is about 202 hectares, out of which lion and deer safari hold some hectares, the road network, total enclosures with dry or wet moats. He talked about the animal adoption scheme of the corporate and individuals, his zoo's coordinating efforts in conservation breeding of endangered falcons. The zoo had experienced the disease of Leptospirosis which was observed in carnivores. Dr. Parag Nigam of Wildlife Institute of India was invited to advise. He made several observations in the animal enclosures and by his advice, the zoo is taking steps to prevent future Leptospirosis. The Afghan group raised questions about this and Dr. M.B. Singh, Sr. Veterinary Officer of the zoo replied all.

Then Mr. R.K. Luna IFS, CCF (Monitoring & Evaluation) shared his past experiences of his tenure at the zoo as Field Director. Afterwards the group was taken to see enclosures, lion & deer safari, food store and veterinary hospital which was explained in detail. Before leaving they were honored with mementoes of the zoo and zoo printed materials. Dr. K.K. Sharma, Vety. Officer, Mr. Ravinder Singh, Range Officer, Gagan Kataria, RO, Jagpal Singh, RO, Satinder Singh, RO accompanied the group. Evening they were taken to Chandigarh town to see the city as well do some shopping.

**Friday, 03 December 2010
Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi**

Mr. Ahmadi and Mr. Azizgul met Mr. B.S. Bonal, Member Secretary, CZA and Dr. Brij Kishor Gupta, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer at the CZA office. They briefed about their zoo development after the war.

Mr. Bonal enquired about their North Indian zoo visit and they replied they have learned a lot. Bonal told them that the CZA will extend all possible help to improve the Kabul Zoo and even offer training to the Kabul zoo staff in India for longer periods.

Mr. Bonal advised them not to look for big animals at this time of development as managing them requires expertise and much time. He said : "Improve your zoo first with the animals you have and instead of going for bigger animals you can go for lower vertebrates." CZA donated some of their publications to the Afghan delegates.



B.S. Bonal, Member Secretary, Central Zoo Authority and Brij Kishor Gupta