



The Animal Welfare Board of India is an umbrella of the SPCAs / AWOs and animal welfare workers. The Board encourages animal welfare activities, advises the Central and State Governments on issues relating to Animal Welfare, particularly, the prevention of cruelty to animals, and also helps to formulate animal welfare policies / legislations.

AWBI Newsletter



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Message From Chairman



Human-Animal Conflicts

Prevent, Restore and Protect

It is inevitable that India, with 17% of the world's animal population, a fast depleting forest and grassland cover, expanding animal and human populations and with the spectre of urbanization and diminishing resources would face human-animal conflicts of an unprecedented scale and magnitude. It is against this backdrop that human-animal conflicts have emerged as crisis points, where immediate action is required. Action that is to be taken on issues of human-animal conflicts would be in two forms, the first one would be direct and immediate, and would involving rounding up in a corner an angry elephant, tiger or dog that has provoked the angry outburst from the humans and working in parallel to douse the flaming wrath of an angry mob.

The second action would be long-term and one that would need to explore the design of habitats and assess its feasibility in adequately protecting the welfare needs of both humans and animals. Whether it is to stem the tide of angry mobs threatening to kill a pack of hungry and aggressive street dogs, starving tigers or the angry elephants whose forests have been cut down, all of it boils down to one issue, lack of sensitivity to provide for the needs of the animal species in question and the decline in following sustainable lifestyle practices on the part of humans.

How are animal welfare activists to resolve such issues? Will a voice imploring for peace and compassion be heard when people are angry, if their farms have been invaded by an angry group of elephants or their children bitten by angry dogs. Fury and rage, whether it is animal or human, cannot be easily quelled with pacifying talks. What both the species involved, animal and human are asking for, is sheltering space and access to resources. If we look at human-animal conflicts with understanding, we see that these situations have emerged because of the lack of proper systems in place to provide adequately for the welfare needs of the human beings as well as the animals.

Looking at the situation more closely, we can see that situations like dog-human conflicts have emerged because of unfair practices being perpetuated. We have slums in cities, exposing often illiterate or semi-literate and poor people to living their lives in fear and insecurity with no proper dwelling or habitations because of an exploitative and unfair system of urbanization. In the urban landscape the hungry, homeless and poor have to live and compete in habitats and environs which give them no access to resources that the rich and the middle class have. A significant number of the victims in cities who are bitten by street dogs are often homeless people living on the streets or in pathetic dwellings that are called slums.

Coming to wildlife, when we look at elephant-human, tiger-human, monkey-human and cattle-human conflicts that are often seen in rural India, it is another scenario that emerges, one of complete destruction of the forests. It is often the experience of village folk who have lived for decades in well forested areas with a thriving tiger, elephant, snake and monkey population, that there are almost no reports of these animals coming outside their habitats to attack human beings. It is when the forests are cut down and every bit of the last sheltering vestiges are broken down that these hungry animals dare to invade human habitations.

...Contd on page 2

National Centre For Disease Control Supports AWBI For ABC & Mass Rabies Vaccinations

Chennai: The 4th Annual General Meeting of the Animal Welfare Board of India was held on November 15th, 2013 at the Board's office in Chennai and was attended by Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Dr. R.M. Kharb, AVSM, Chairman, AWBI, Dr. S. Chinny Krishna, Vice Chairman, AWBI and Members of the Board, Shri Rajiv Gupta, IAS - (Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports), Shri Guljarilal Soni, Shri Doulat Jain, Dr. Arun Varma, Ms. Norma Alvares, Ms. Anjali Sharma, Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dy. Director In-charge, Central Research Institute, Noida, Dr. Ajai Kumar Yadav, Ministry of Agriculture, Rep. of Animal Husbandry Commissioner, Brig. S.S. Chohan, VSM (Retd), Rep. of Municipal Corporation, Gurgaon, Shri Surjit Singh, Joint Secretary (AW), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Special Invitee, Ms. Geethanjali, IFS, Deputy Secretary (AW), Ministry of Environment & Forests and Smt. S. Uma Rani, Secretary, AWBI.

Hon'ble Chairman informed Members of the Board about his sustained dialogue with National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), Ministry of Health regarding implementation of Rabies Control Project under "One Health" programme for human and animal components. He said, "both the human and animal components are interconnected for Rabies Control and they must be implemented together. The Animal Husbandry Department says that dogs are not included in the list of livestock animals and hence cannot be addressed by them. Since the public health is concerned with the Human rabies control, this problem can be addressed by the Ministry of Health". Hon'ble Chairman informed the Board Members that in Srilanka, Thailand and Singapore, the responsibility of Rabies Control in street dogs through Mass Vaccination and Sterilization is with the Public Health Department. Briefing members about the success of the first phase of Project Mission Rabies, Hon'ble Chairman informed members of the Board that the National Centre for Disease Control has approved a total budget of Rs.50.00 crores for a pilot Rabies Control project of which Rs.20.00 crores will be used for the human programme and Rs.30.00 crores will be for ABC and mass vaccination of street dogs.

The Board unanimously approved the Annual Report and adoption of the Audit Report and Annual Accounts of the Animal Welfare Board of India for the year 2012-13 as well as confirmation of the Minutes of the 39th General Meeting held on 23rd August, 2013.

Other notable decisions taken include the following:

❑ The Board has requested the Ministry to relax the conditions of Shelter House and Ambulance schemes by reducing the period of lease from 30 years to 10 years under Shelter House scheme so that a large number of Gaushalas who are in possession of Government land can avail the Shelter House Grant. The Joint Secretary (AW) assured that he will look into the proposal submitted by the Board.

❑ In order to provide more assistance to the needy organizations who have expanded their activities during the past years after getting grant in-aid under Shelter House and Ambulance schemes, the Board has decided to reduce the period from 10 years to 5 years and 5 years to 2 years to avail grants under Shelter House and Ambulance schemes respectively. In view of approval of this decision, the Board can consider more proposals and utilize the budget allocation under these schemes in this financial year.

❑ The Board discussed about the use of Ambulances and decided that Tractor and Trolley can be used by AWOs for primarily transporting animals and also for transporting fodder, cow dung etc. which are all for the welfare of animals. The Municipalities/Civic Bodies working for stray animals in coordination with animal welfare organizations can also avail grant-in-aid under Shelter House and Ambulance Schemes.

❑ The Board has decided that the applications for Regular Grant will not be processed for consideration of grant unless the utilization certificate for earlier grant is furnished by the AWOs and in future no conditional sanction will be issued.

❑ It was decided by the Board that PeTA be approached for identification of Elephant Sanctuaries for rehabilitation of elephants from circuses.

❑ The draft SOP on ABC Laparoscopy for sterilization of street dogs submitted by Vikas C. Mehrotra, Head-Veterinary, Kari Storz Endoscopy India Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi has been approved.

❑ Consideration of SOP on ABC by CNVR Method and Same Day Release method has not been approved by the Board.

❑ The SOP on Gaushalas prepared by Brigadier S.S.Chohan, Member, AWBI has been approved by the Board and it has been decided to translate the same into Hindi.

❑ The Board has approved release of a grant of Rs.3.20 lakhs to CPREEC for conducting a Seminar on Animal Welfare in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

❑ The Golden Jubilee Souvenir prepared by Board has been sent to the Hon'ble Minister of Environment & Forests for approval for printing and publishing the same in New Delhi. There has been an undue delay in getting the approval of Hon'ble Minister. The Joint Secretary (AW) assured to follow up the matter.

❑ The Minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee Meetings held on 30.10.2013 and 14.11.2013 were approved and ratified.

❑ The Annual General Meeting considered the Revised Estimates 2013-14 and Budget Estimates 2014-15 submitted to the Ministry and ratified the same. The AGM decided that a letter to be sent to the Ministry for re-appropriation of Rs.1.00 crore from Shelter House Scheme to Plan Scheme immediately.

❑ Consideration of matter relating to Revised Draft of the Animal Welfare Bill 2012. The AGM decided that this matter be discussed by the Legal Experts in the Legal Committee with the Joint Secretary, MoEF. ❑

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Unless we have better policies in place to grow back the forests as quickly as possible, the spectre of human-wild animal conflicts will continue to persist as an ugly situation that will only escalate in complexity and magnitude in the years to come. What needs to be done as an immediate priority would be to increase the land mass allocated to the Protected Areas in the country and bring a much larger number of different habitats to be marked as Protected zones. Besides this, another alarming fact is that some of the Protected Areas in the country actually have national highways as well as railway networks functional. This must be completely stopped. Neither bus, truck or train must be allowed to venture into the zone of a Protected Area.

When it comes to human-elephant conflicts, let us understand that Elephants are among the most intelligent animals on earth with an amazing memory and a high level of sentience. They are also very social beings who live in communities and establish strong bonds of kinship with their families, friends and relatives. India has about 27,000 wild and 5,000 captive elephants with 32 elephant reserves. In 2010, elephants were declared heritage animals. Unfortunately, in India, despite the well known observation that elephants are a flagship species, indicative of the richness of biodiversity in an area, it is a disturbing fact to see their habitats being destroyed. Besides, captive elephants often suffer severe trauma due to the stress of being chained, isolated and confined to tiny spaces with no movement. Foot problems too are endemic in both zoos and among the temple elephants due to the unnatural and often quite inhospitable living conditions of these beautiful and gentle, sentient beings. There are also very few veterinarians who have specialized in medicine and surgical protocols of elephants. Most of the veterinarians attending to elephants are self-taught in this area. As much as human-elephant conflicts is a huge issue in rural India, another area of the Board's major concern is for the welfare of captive elephants used in circuses, films, temple elephants and also those elephants used for promoting tourism.

Elephants used for work are subjected to severe trauma – that start right from the early days of their capture as young calves and later, when they are subjected to long hours of very stressful work. In India, elephants are employed for work in some of the State Forest Governments as well as used in religious processions and festivals as temple elephants. The plight of the temple elephants of Kerala is especially disturbing. Within a short duration of eight months between January 2013 and August 2013, Thrissur based Heritage Animal Task Force has reported, “36 captive elephants have died in Kerala”. The organization states that, “29 of the 36 elephants were owned by individuals”.

The severe torture and suffering that elephants undergo has also led to their retaliating against the unnatural environment and cruelty inflicted on them. As per data provided by the Heritage Animal Task Force “the number of human beings who have died in incidents where temple elephants have become violent include, “26 in 2007-08, 29 in 2008-09, 33 in 2009-10, 75 in 2010-11, 49 in 2011-12 and 3 in 2012-13 along with an additional 240 incidents of attacks by elephants”. In the areas where farmlands border the forests, there too human-elephant conflicts are commonly seen. In such places, it is mandatory that all the villagers gather together to conserve and protect the forests by growing back the trees that have been cut down.

To force a wild animal like an elephant to stay in a close, confined space and subject it to stress, pain and suffering, besides the exposure to loud sounds and hordes of people, can be extremely traumatic. It is but natural that elephants may retaliate. There is only one solution that can come out from this contentious issue and that is to create sanctuaries where elephants can be taken care of. In that context, I request all the Temple Owners Associations in Kerala and in other states in the country to come forward to conserve and protect the welfare of the captive elephants by setting up specially protected areas where elephants can have freedom of space to move around and are well protected and cared for in a natural habitat. Most of the elephant owners do not even have the legally valid ownership certificate.

Considering that the population of elephants in the country is so small and the people who own elephants are all quite wealthy, one way to tackle this issue in a harmonious manner perhaps would be to counsel, educate and sensitize key people in the temple management trusts as well as the elephant owners. This can be followed up by creating a blueprint for eco-friendly and sustainable, elephant friendly habitats, that are designed on the lines of a protected area. Such a space can not only provide a sheltering habitat for the elephants but also generate some revenue so that the associations and individuals can also in some way financially benefit by investing in such a sustainable, elephant friendly initiative. It may be remembered that the Elephant Task Force’s recommendation was to set up 10 elephant landscapes covering 1,10,000 sq kms around the reserves. Currently, less than 30% of the land in elephant reserves come within a protected area, leaving a large area of even elephant reserves quite vulnerable to dangers on many fronts.

It is high time that we help this magnificent creature of our Animal Kingdom to be freed from the chains and allowed to go to its natural habitat i.e. the forest. Banning the use of elephants and other animals in circuses for performance where they are subjected to immense abuse should be our top priority.

Coming to the issue of cattle-human conflicts, once again this unfortunate scenario has emerged because all the gochar lands have been taken away. Considering that Indians are huge consumers of milk and milk based products, and India is the world's largest milk producer, it is likely that this scenario may worsen in the coming years. The only way to mitigate this crisis is through education and awareness and by also reviving the gochar lands that were earlier reserved for grazing. It is time that every district in the country had a large and well defined area allocated for the cattle to graze. Such a space must not only provide land for the cattle to graze, but it must also provide sufficient opportunities for people who are engaged in rearing cattle to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities, and especially those that are most conducive to protecting the soil as well as the natural resources. Therefore, opportunities for generation of biogas, production of compost and panchagavya products must all be part of such initiatives.

There is only one advice I wish to give each one of you who is actively involved in animal welfare work that in human-animal conflicts, both the humans affected and the animals are often victims. The real cause for such conflicts to emerge in the first place is because of policies that have not given priority to protecting natural resources. If the root cause is taken care of, the whole system will automatically be set in place. Now, who is going to address this issue. Can a handful of individuals working in isolation, such as most Animal Welfare Organizations in the country do actually come forward with a solution to innovatively tackle a nation-wide problem? Yes, it is possible. Education and sensitization can play a remarkable role in resolving such issues.

Regarding protection of wildlife, we have much to learn from our brothers and sisters in Africa where protection of wildlife is much more harmoniously integrated within the national agenda of some countries and also actively promoted through a range of sustainable eco-tourism initiatives and sustainable income generating activities for people in the villages. Can we not follow a similar model in India, so that we create a win-win situation for not only our animal friends but also our human brethren? If people living in villages could get specialized training and income generation opportunities as wildlife guides, would they then not behave more proactively in protecting the forests and the animals too? Similarly, our feral and unproductive cattle too can be protected in grasslands and scrub lands and presented as heritage animals, worthy of being visited by tourists and explored and studied by school and college students. The resolution of human-animal conflicts offers space and freedom for innovative thinking and new models of sustainable and harmonious living. If anyone has a plan or a model to harmoniously resolve human-animal conflicts, please share your thoughts with me.

With best wishes,
Sd/-
Maj. Gen. (Retd) Dr. R. M. Kharb, AVSM

Sirohi: In the tribal belt of district Sirohi-Tehsil Pindwara, a large number. of livestock like sheep goat and cattle and buffaloes, camels are reared. There is also a famous pilgrimage spot of the Jain community located in Bamanwadji village called Bamanwadji Tirthsthan. A few animal lovers from the Jain community wanted to organize animal health camp in memory of their beloved Guruji - respected Late Poojya Shri Kamal Vijay Maharaj.

It was felt that November 5th 2013 being the death anniversary of Poojya Guru Maharaj would be the best occasion for conducting an animal welfare camp. Ms. Romi Bhansali, Founder of Ashapuri Charitable Trust coordinated this camp. A two day animal health and vaccination camp was organized at the premises of Bamanwadji temple on November 5th and 6th, 2013. The work was supported by volunteers from PFA Sirohi along with personnel from the Animal Husbandry Department of Sirohi. Mr. Amit Singh Deol started the campaign for this camp by creating awareness in all the villages near this holy place. Mr. Mahveer Jain along with Smt Veju Devi Bhaver Lal Ji of K. C. Kundan Group, Mumbai provided financial support for this camp.

In this camp a total of 6316 animals benefited, with 729 animals getting general treatment while surgery was performed on 12 animals, 20 animals were treated to combat infertility, 228 animals received vaccinations, and 5555 sheep and goat were given deworming medication. ...Contd on pg 3

Animal Welfare Camp in Bamanwadi Tirthsthan



Jaipur Celebrates Compassionate Living Festival

Jaipur: The Jaipur Federation of Animal Protection Organisations (JFAPO) organized a Compassionate Living Festival on November 30th, 2013 at Shilp gram in Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur. The event was organized by 12 animal welfare organizations who are part of JFAPO. The event drew support from animal welfare activists and groups in Delhi, Mumbai and Goa. Over three hundred people attended the festival. The venue décor was taken care of by Arch Academy of design, Jaipur. The first fifty visitors at the event received prizes sponsored by Hotel Clarks Amer and Senso Vegetarian Shoes. The event received wide coverage in the electronic media online as well as TV channels like Zee, ETV Rajasthan, Siti network and Firstindia news.

Information stalls were set up by Help Suffering Lives Society, Tourism and Wildlife Society of India, Initiative to Conserve Nature & Animals (ICAN), Greenpeace India, Angel Eyes, Jaipur, Help in Suffering, Raksha, RAW, Pragya Chaitanya Foundation Trust, JFAPO and FIAPO. Besides Senso Vegetarian Shoes, product stalls with a range of eco-friendly products were set up by Green N Good, Rangini, New Delhi, The Happy Store and Arch Academy of Design. Besides art and craft, vegan food stalls were a special attraction of the festival.

Source: www.fiapo.org



Slaughterhouses Close For a Day in Rajkot

Rajkot: A recent event at Rajkot will be marked with golden letters in the annals of the history of activities for animal welfare. This event exemplified what could be done by and for animal welfare activists. Besides, this event shall be remembered with pride and joy by all animal welfare activists. This was an event where slaughter houses of Rajkot remained voluntarily closed to pay befitting tribute and homage to an outstanding animal welfare activist the late Shri Jayantibhai L. Shah on his first death anniversary.

Shri Jayantibhai Shah worked relentlessly and incessantly for nearly six decades to save sick and abandoned animals of the bovine community from slaughter houses and to shelter and maintain large number of animals at a local animal welfare institute, the Rajkot Mahajans Panjarapole established in 1896. Not only in India but possibly for the very first time in the world, slaughter houses remained voluntarily closed to pay homage to an animal welfare activist, who was very much against the interest and activities of the butchers and their slaughter houses. That is why; the event under reference is unique, exemplary and historical in every respect.

It is pertinent to note that motivation from an outstanding animal welfare activist like Shri. Rajendra R. Shah, Co-opt Member of AWBI (Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India), also Hony. Secretary of Rajkot Mahajan's Panjarapole and very active and energetic propagator of "jeev daya" (compassion towards all living beings) was instrumental for the event under reference. The slaughter houses were locked for the day at his hands (please refer to the adjacent photo on the top left hand corner). A meeting was organized after the closure of slaughter houses which was well attended by the office bearers of Butcher's Association, family members of butchers and a large numbers of local social workers, political leaders and animal welfare activists.



...Contd from page 2

The tribal communities owning animals and residing in the villages of Undra, Parlai, Sanwada, Virvada, Jhadoli, and Ambaji benefited from this camp. Ms. Romi Bhansali, Shri Babulal V. Jain, Nominated Member, AWBI, Secretary, PFA Sirohi, Shri Amit Deol, Shri Ajit Gohil, Shri Sunil Verma and Shri Shantilal were the key people involved in organizing this camp. From the veterinary side, Dr. Inder Singh, Dr. Sudher, Dr. Temburkar, Dr. Badole, Dr. Aves Khan and a few assistant livestock workers provided veterinary care.. On this great occasion many of the followers of respected late Poojya Shri Kamal Vijayji Maharaj took an oath to take care of the welfare of needy animals. It is hoped that over the next three years, the same camp will be conducted at Bamanwadi tirthsthan as an annual event.

Source: PFA Sirohi



Reliance Retail Outlets Go Veg

Mumbai: Shri Mukesh Ambani, a strict vegetarian and animal lover has finally taken that long awaited decision to ban all non-vegetarian products from his Reliance Retail chain. All 100 Reliance Delight stores that sell a range of fresh and frozen meats and seafood, including the Godrej brand of "Real" frozen chicken will be shut down. It appears that a section of shareholders of the Reliance Industries have been campaigning for the popular Reliance outlets to go vegetarian. Earlier in October, Reliance had planned to launch a fast food chain called Chicken Came First, a Kentucky Fried Chicken-clone, through its joint venture with the 2 Sisters Food Group of Birmingham. Fortunately, for the birds and the animals, the idea has been dropped.

Source: www.fiapo.org and <http://www.mudraa.com>

"A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral." – Leo Tolstoy.

"It is my view that the vegetarian manner of living, by its purely physical effect on the human temperament, would most beneficially influence the lot of mankind."— Albert Einstein

बामनवाडी, सिरौही में जैन तीर्थ केंद्र के निकट पशु कल्याण शिविर का आयोजन

शिविर के दौरान लिए गए कुछ फोटो नीचे दिए गए हैं



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To



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Human-animal conflicts

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