

# Training in Southern India for Kabul Zoo Staff ... some feed-back

**Sally Walker**

Our readers may remember when the Kabul Zoo Email Group entrusted ZOO with giving some exposure and training to the senior zoo staff of Kabul Zoo. We had published a long report about it. The Kabul Zoo Email Group (KZEG), David Jones, Director, North Carolina Zoo; Brendan Jones, former rescuer Iraq and Kabul Zoo; Nick Lindsay of London Zoological Society; James Hogan, Director of Mayhew Animal Home and I discussed how to evaluate the success of the tour and training of the Afghan Zoo visitors. It was decided to rely on Mr. Ahmadi for news and confirmation of what the zoo staff had learned.

Dr. Jamil, who is an Afghan also working at Mayhew Animal Home along with James, called Mr. Ahmadi and asked him to give a report which outlined the benefits for the zoo of the training with "Sally's team" in India. He duly provided a report which we can share with our readers. Jamal felt Mr. Ahmadi was very pleased, apart from the slow pace of the current phase of the reconstruction work, a different matter.

Mr. Ahmadi reported back. Based on the evaluation carried out from the work of the Kabul Zoo staff since they returned from India, the following positive performances had been done:

1. Previously medical treatment of the Lion was a great problem in the Kabul Zoo, especially injecting anesthesia, but after the experience of India, now this has become very easy.

2. Previously food was served to animals on the ground but now wooden tables are made which prevent kinds of diseases to animals.

3. Previously birds were served food in metallic plates, but now in sand-made plates to have the natural look

4. Standardized boards have been installed in the Zoo for the first time, which show an illustration of the animal and/or bird along with the food it is served.

5. We have learned many things of which the most interesting thing is playing with chain in Land Day that you personally watched. Celebration of Land Day was another initiative in the history of Kabul Zoo and in the history of Afghanistan. In that, animals that are likely to be distinct are highlighted. Many diplomatic corps, representatives of the governmental and non-governmental organizations and many children attended this.

6. Producing a generation of ordinary birds is easy, but producing a generation of birds like Shotor Morgh, Tawoos was in vain. However, now following the order of the Kabul Municipality's Management, a machine is purchased for the same purpose which we believe will serve well. Shotor Morgh is an ostrich and a Tawoos is a peacock

7. Making the cover for aquariums in a natural way with beautiful designs, painting the same and introduction of the eggs in three languages such as English, Dari, and Pashtu has made it interesting for the people to visit Kabul Zoo.

8. Positive changes in the administrative and daily working system occurred.

Kabul Zoo is under reconstruction. Some of the great problems are because the construction company had not followed the clauses of the contract. Although the duration of the contract was for 18 months, now after 3 years the construction activities are still not completed. If, however, the construction works of the Zoo is finished in the near future, then the staff would be able to apply what they have learned in the training sessions in India. The trainees have prepared a proposal for change of the designs of the cages for the birds which is in progress. Other minor construction activities can also be taken care of if the management of the Kabul Municipality takes decisions in time. Once the above is done, more initiatives would be considered.

Sally Walker is visiting Kabul in mid-July to see the zoo and interact with the staff. This will help her and the Kabul Zoo email group plan future training experiences for the staff.

It is hoped also that a small selection of administrators and staff can attend the 10th Annual Conference of the South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation SAZARC where they can meet other colleagues from South Asian zoos and share experience.