

## Zoo Keeper's training Programme at V.J.B. Udyan Zoo, Mumbai, Maharashtra

The Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Udyan Zoo is one of the oldest zoos in the country which was laid in the year 1862. In the year 1873, the management of this Udyan Zoo was handed over to the Municipal Corporation by the Maharashtra Government. The total area of this zoo is around 53 acres.

M.C.G.M. Administration have taken up a project of modernization and complete revamping of this zoo. The Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi has principally approved the said Master (Layout) Plan with some rectifications. The development works such as construction of temporary zoo hospital, quarantine area, interpretation centre is been taken up and other works including construction of animal enclosures would be started soon. New animals as per the new animal collection plan would be procured, as soon as the new enclosures will be constructed as per the Master Plan.

It was felt necessary to conduct Zoo Keeper's Training Programme (ZKTP) on the topics related to day to day works of the animal keepers, working at the Zoo for capacity building and updating their knowledge. It was decided to conduct the "ZKTP" in three stages. In the first stage lectures on the basic information about various related topics were included. Lectures on the detailed information along with the practical knowledge wherever necessary on the respective topics will be given in the second stage and in the third stage the keepers will be sent to different zoos in the country for training purpose.

Accordingly a first stage programme was conducted for the Zoo keepers at the Zoo. The details of the programme are as follows

1) On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 a lecture on the topic "Day to day work schedule of the Zoo Animal Keepers" was delivered by Dr. Sanjay A. Tripathi, Dy. Supdt. (Vet.)/c, Dr. Tripathi emphasized on the importance of strict following of a work schedule by animal keepers for proper management of the zoo. He elaborated that the Zoo Keepers in beginning of the duty, should check the locks of the feed houses & enclosures as well as while leaving their cage/enclosures. They should then inspect the quantity of uneaten food and also



**One of several zoo managers explain management techniques to the zookeepers.**



**Discussion of topics pertaining to zookeepers daily routine.**

their urine and stool whether it is normal. The animal keeper should observe the behaviour of the animals and make a note if any abnormality is observed. Thereafter the feeding and drinking water utensils and the feed houses/display areas should be thoroughly cleaned by sweeping and washing with disinfectants mixed in water. Thereafter the animals should be appropriately fed with right quantity of feed. Dr. Tripathi also emphasized that the zoo keepers in their spare times, should interact with the visitors and answer their general questions

about the zoo animals. In all 21 animal keepers participated in the said programme.

2) On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012 Dr. Komal Powar, Veterinary Officer had given a lecture on "Identifying disease symptoms in sick animals" along with a power point presentation. Dr. Komal Powar gave information on identifying different signs of illness in wild mammals, birds and reptiles. An ill animal will show signs of not eating food, staying away from group, limping, unable to stand or walk, swelling of any body part etc.



**Zookeepers paid close attention to all the information given in the training.**



**Zookeepers were requested to give their own suggestions which would help in planning the second stage of the training.**

She also emphasized on particular attention towards the amount of food consumed, type of food preferred, color of the urine and stools, especially in birds. The information was made easy to understand with the help of photographs of different signs of illness in mammals like elephants, lions, wild boar, deers, hyena, birds like budgerigars, duck, cranes, peacock, reptiles like snakes, turtles etc. In all

25 animal keepers participated in the said programme.

3) Thereafter, on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012, Shri. A.L. Paranjpe, Education-cum-Public Relations Officer, delivered a lecture on "Educational activities at V.J.B. Udyan Zoo". Shri. Paranjpe, in his lecture briefed that, as per the National Zoo policy adopted by the Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi, today all the Indian Zoos are working for conservation of endangered wildlife

species and also as an education centre for creating empathy, interest and awareness about wildlife in the minds of school/college students, teachers and general visitors. Thereafter a interactive session was conducted on how to answer the general queries of the visitors. A presentation on the various educational activities conducted at Zoo was given to the participating zoo keepers. In all 20 animal keepers participated in the said programme.

4) On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2012 Shri. A.M. Anjankar, Director (Zoo) delivered a lecture on the topic "Environmental enrichment inside the animal enclosures". Director (Zoo) explained the importance of enrichment activities for betterment of physical and psychological health of the existing as well as newly arriving animals in the zoo as per the Master Plan of Zoo. Various means and methods for carrying out these activities were discussed. In all 25 animal keepers participated in the said programme.

5) On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2012 Dr. M.S. Karawale, Retired Dy. Supdt.(Zoo), delivered a lecture on the topic "Shifting and transportation of the zoo animals" along with a power point presentation. Dr. Karawale emphasised on the care and precautionary measures to be taken while shifting or transportation of animals, tranquillisation techniques, various designs of transport cages for different types of animals, birds and reptiles. The presentation also contained the precautionary measures & procedures to be undertaken while transporting the animals by road as well as by an aeroplane. Dr. Karawale, shared his past experiences while undertaking transportation of various animals such as Hippopotamus, Elephants and Sambar Deer etc. In all 25 animal keepers participated in the said programme.

The Zoo Keepers were requested to give their suggestions which would enable while framing the second stage training programmes.

The programme was concluded with the vote of thanks by the Education-cum-Public Relations Officer.

The second stage programmes as mentioned above will be organised in the month of August 2012.

**Submitted by the Director, V.J.B. Udyan Zoo, Mumbai, Maharashtra.**  
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