

Jamshid Noori, Veterinarian, Kabul Zoo visits Arignar Anna Zoo, Vandalur for a month of advanced veterinary study

Editor



The Zoo Outreach Organisation (ZOO) has had a very friendly and fruitful relationship with the Kabul Zoo, Afghanistan since about 2003. I was fortunate to belong to an informal group of guys from different parts of the world who were doing things for the zoo. Brendon Whittington-Jones from South Africa had gone there as soon as he heard the problems the war was causing the zoo and stayed for months helping them sort out things. David Jones, a well known animal welfare enthusiast and British zoo director and then Director of North Carolina Zoo in USA, Nick Lindsay, Curator at Whipsnade Park, ZSL, James Hogan, Mayhew Animal Welfare Society and me. We discussed the difficulties at Kabul Zoo by email and tried to help out from afar. We called ourselves a modest Kabul Zoo Group.

ZOO sent educational materials to the Kabul Zoo education department that actually had an education officer, Md. Saidal Fazel thanks to the Kabul Zoo Group. Then sent us photos of kids using the materials.

Dr. Kushal Habibi, an Afghan himself settled in USA, who was a part time zoologist and full time worker in the US government, was writing a Afghan wild animals wildlife book and was looking for someone to organise the drawings, typesetting and printing, so ZOO and the KZG agreed to take it on. It was a very nice book with black and white illustrations by our artist, Arnab Roy. Kushal wrote the text and also translated it into Dari, the language of Afghans. We published several hundred copies in both languages and shipped them to Kabul thanks to the US Embassy in India, and they were distributed to teachers and special visitors.

We then got more bold and began arranging training visits to India of different kinds for the zoo staff. Md. Saidal Fazel was first and he attended several educator workshops and saw a



Jamshid Noori, the new, young veterinarian in Kabul Zoo and Aziz Gul, Director of Kabul Zoo before Jamshid takes off for Chennai, India to learn advanced zoo veterinary medicine at Arignar Anna Zoo

Right: Jamshid and his mentor Dr. Thirumurugan kindly came to see me in my hotel when I was trying to recover from dental surgery before extensive travel. We all got acquainted and became old friends the same visit. Photo by Dr. Thiru.



Below: Dr. Thirumurugan and Jamshid autopsy a Nilgiri Langur finding it was healthy with no sickness or clinical symptoms. Early morning keepers found its dead body in the cage. They moved it to hospital and did postmortem, taking samples from the kidney, intestine, lungs, heart and blood.



number of zoos. He also attended a SAZARC Conference during one visit. Later we hosted three officers, the director, Aziz Gul, the long term vet, Dr. Abdul Qadir Bahawi, and Najibullah Nazary the Education officer. They came to South India for a tour and some training and stayed in Coimbatore where our office is a few days. R. Marimuthu, our education officer took them around to different zoos in the state where the officials were truly excited to have such unusual visitors. It went very well.

Next I visited the Kabul Zoo in Afghanistan and was very impressed with the organisation and staff. I loved Kabul city as well as the zoo, the friendly people and the food.

We also had the threesome at our 10th SAZARC meeting and afterward, our Education Officer Marimuthu escorted them around some zoos in North India.

Dr. Qader was getting near retirement age and the zoo wisely engaged an enthusiastic young veterinary doctor from Kabul, and that is Jamshid. He is zealous and dedicated to his work and he surely will be an excellent zoo vet.

Jamshid Noori is an Afghan gentleman with objectives to serve his country, use his talent effectively and make the most of his opportunities. Dr. Jamshid earned BVM/Bachelor Degree at the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences in Kabul, Afghanistan and since has added some training in modern clinical techniques, pathological basis of diseases, animal transboundary diseases and computer science. He is fluent in English, Pasto, Urdu and Dari. His hobbies include travel, socializing, and watching wild animal programmes on t.v.

The Arignar Anna Zoological Park - Objectives and the Tamil Nadu Zoo Authority

I had the valuable experience of visiting the AA Zoo in its birthing stages. I was working in Mysore Zoo then and my Director requested me to go there for a couple of days and check out a Nilgiri langur they were willing to give to the Mysore Zoo.

It was way away from any hotel and at that time had no guest house, so I slept in the then Directors Office as he had a single bed there where he used to sleep before he found suitable accommodation!



Above: Jamshid practising with the anesthesia gun and blow pipe to immobilize for injections and other treatments of zoo animals.

Left: Jamshid is doing well with the blow pipe and points out his "bull's eye" during his practice session.



Bottom: Arignar Anna Zoo recently reconstructed its entrance, making it very dignified and dramatic. Jamshid poses in front of this significant landmark in the zoo.



The land was full of Eucalyptus trees and dirt, not much of a naturalistic setting but over the decades, it has become one of India's five best zoos, perhaps the best depending on your taste in zoos.

The Objectives of the Arignar Anna Zoo are:

1. *Ex-situ* conservation and propagation of the fauna of Western and Eastern Ghats.
2. Initiate captive breeding programme for endangered species in accordance with the protocol for rehabilitation of this species in the wild if necessary.
3. Promote zoo as center of conservation awareness by organizing wildlife education and interpretation programme to elicit broad based public support from different sections of society and enhance public awareness of wild life.
4. Provide opportunity to conduct scientific studies on the fauna to enhance our knowledge on animal behaviour, its biology, ecology etc., so as to aid in scientific management of the zoo and conservation of wildlife.
5. To provide facility for health care and rehabilitation of rescued animals.

ZOO AUTHORITY OF TAMIL NADU

Ever since the results of the Central Zoo Authority were realised, many of the larger Indian zoos have become interested in creating an Authority administration. In 2004 itself the Tamil Nadu government approved the Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu under the Tamil Nadu Society Act and functioning from April 1 2005.



Jamshid learns the many procedures to be performed in the AA Zoo laboratory, including fecal examinations and making fecal slides which indicate the health of the animals. Photo by Dr. Thirumurugan

Dr. Thirumurugan agreed to be Jamshid's mentor during his stay and has guided him through many new & useful procedures. Also Thirumurugan has also observed other parts of the zoo and learned a great many things about animal management generally.

Dr. R. Thirumurugan studied at Madras Veterinary College and Research Institute, acquiring his B.V.Sc. in 2002 with a specialisation in Veterinary Science, and later studied Wildlife Science in the same institution in addition to many trainings, workshops and conferences both in India and abroad. In 2002 he joined AA Zoo, Vandalur. In 2004 he was Asst. Veterinary Surgeon at Wildlife Trust of India treating wildlife in the wild. In 2007 he returned as Vet. Asst. Surgeon at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, and in 2012 was permanently posted there.



Sri K.S.S.V.P.REDDY, I.F.S.

Chief Conservator of Forests and Director of Arignar Anna Zoo was very kind to agree to our request to host Jamshid and teach him all possible techniques during his stay.

Thank you very much Sir!



The ZATN functions under a Governing Board and obtains funds from the state government for salaries and maintenance of zoo vehicles. Maintenance of animal enclosures, feed for animals, animal health care, cleanliness of zoo, drainage, water, electricity and maintenance of battery operated vehicles are met from the income generated from the zoo, realized from the entry fees, BOV charges, leased parking area, Hotel Tamil Nadu, Aavin, TANTEA, bicycles, toilet lease and Elephant rides. The amount generated from the entry fees and other revenue are deposited in the account of Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu.

The annual budget of Arignar Anna Zoological Park is approved by the Governing Board for development and maintenance works of the Park. Once the Governing Board approve the works in anticipation of Government order and the works are executed. The funds released by the Central Zoo Authority towards new development works, maintenance of the rescue centre and funds received from Non-Governmental and Government agencies are deposited in the Zoo Authority of Tamilnadu account.

Administration: The Zoo by a Director in the rank of Chief Conservator of Forests assisted by one Deputy Director and one Assistant Director besides 27 ministerial staff, 39 field staff (inclusive of drivers) and 172 permanent workers. Apart from the regular staff, contract laborers are also engaged. One Veterinary Officer and two Veterinary Assistant Surgeons head the Veterinary section with two Veterinary attendants. The work of education, interpretation and research is assigned to the three Biologists of the zoo.

Animal Welfare: The Veterinary hospital with all modern facilities like mobile x ray unit, Blood analyzer, Incubator, Deep freezer, computer, in patient and out patient ward, and many other facilities. The vets screen the animals daily and take preventative action to maintain health including good food, clean water, environment and companions. All enclosures have been enriched to prevent boredom.

Research: The zoo is an excellent Ex-situ conservation centre and offers opportunity to conduct Research on animal behaviour, nutrition, reproduction and Veterinary care. Research scholars from different forestry institutions and Post-Graduate students of different Universities are conducting Research programmes for their academic qualifications.

Education, Interpretation and training

One of the main objectives of the zoo is Wildlife education. The Education wing educates the public through the display of animals and plant models, interpretative boards, multimedia presentations and charts. A novel training programme named "Junior zoo keepers" for school children has been conducted from October, 2010 onwards. "Basic biology of Zoo animals and its captive care" programme is conducted annually for 350 field staff of nearby facilities.

Zoo School, Teacher Training, Volunteers

A notable achievement of the zoo was the formation of the Zoo school that runs Zoo education awareness classes on regular basis for students. The zoo conducts outreach programmes, teachers training, zoo club activities, etc., attracting schools that want to enroll on regular basis. Teachers of all schools are encouraged to participate in the teachers training programme that receive overwhelming support from the student community.

"Zoo Guide" is an important document providing information about the zoo to the visitors.

Website

The zoo website www.aazoopark.in gives information on salient features of the zoo in several sections with comprehensive information on all aspects of zoo management, a window to the World that is periodically updated.

Veterinary Care

The zoo has one Veterinary Officer and two Veterinary Assistant Surgeons. Studies on animal health, coupled with rigorous programmes of animal hygiene are ensured by Veterinary wing. An elaborate record keeping system, modern lab, capture equipment, practice of preventive veterinary medicine, close supervision of each and every animal enclosure, balanced diet, early diagnosis aspects have enabled the zoo to control and manage animal diseases.

A special drive to contain the monkey menace has been launched in Chennai and surrounding areas as per the Hon'ble Chief Minister's suggestions. All the eligible well grown male monkeys are sterilized by using bloodless surgical diathermy cauterization in Zoo hospital. The Zoo Veterinarians have developed protocol for sterilization and recuperation. So far 190 monkeys have been vasectomized.

Rescue Centre

The Central Government banned the performance and exhibition of five species of animals namely Tiger, Lion, Panther, Bear and Monkeys in 1998 and requested seven State Governments to set up Rescue and Rehabilitation centers. A Rescue centre in Arignar Anna Zoological Park was established for 40 Lions and 20 Tigers during the year 2000-2001. Now it has 17 lions and 5 tigers.

Coordinated Captive Breeding

Lion tailed macaque is one of the most critically endangered species indigenous to the Western Ghats. Two off exhibit water moated enclosures have been built for Lion tailed macaque away from the visitor area to promote natural behavior. Two troops have been released into these off-visit enclosures exclusively for breeding purpose.

Nilgiri langur has also been designated to Arignar Anna Zoological Park as species coordinator by the Central Zoo Authority. It is the only zoo regularly breeding it.

Nilgiri Tahr also been designated to Arignar Anna Zoological Park as species co-coordinator. No animal is available in the Park. Steps have been initiated to procure the animals.

The Next issue of ZOO' PRINT will carry another article more about Jamshid and in his own words about what he learned, how he felt, what he studied, how he will use it in Kabul Zoo. We at Zoo Outreach Organisation are happy to have sponsored Dr. Jamshid and we could not have done so without assistance from the Chester Zoo , UFAW and Arignar Anna Zoological Park.

