

Report on the “Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park”

Compiled by S. Nagaraj *

First of all we would like to thank the Hon'ble Member Secretary Zoo Authority of Karnataka, and Executive Director, Sri. Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, for providing us an opportunity to visit Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park, Tirupathi on study tour from 29 April to 1 May 2003.

Our team comprised of myself as the leader of the team and Zoo volunteers Sri Saptha Girish and six members of our Animal Keepers viz., Sri. Kempalinga, Sri. Puttaswamy, Sri. Mahadeva. C., Sri. Javanappa, Sri. Madhu. M., Sri. Krishna. M

The S.V. Zoological Park was established on 30.4.93 by the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department. The area allocated for the Park is 2212 Ha, out of which 250 Ha of land is now considered for development of Zoological Park. The area is marked for plantation for Red Sandalwood Trees. The Zoological Park is situated on the way to Tirumala with backdrop of seven hills. It is developed on Mythological Theme.

The Zoological Park is classified into 17 zones called “Vanam” such as Kishkinda Vanam, Mareecha Vanam, Airavatha Vanam, Mayura Vanam, Shakti Vanam, Bharatha Vanam etc., Wild animals are displayed and housed in their respective Vanam according to their role in the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharatha. At present, 56 species of 500 mammals, birds and reptiles were housed and displayed in seventeen moated enclosures, four groups of birds enclosure and aviary.

The holding rooms and the open enclosures were constructed in accordance with Central Zoo Authority norms and guidelines. Sufficient space is allocated to each species and animals were exhibited inside the open enclosure in natural habitat. The holding rooms were constructed below the viewpoint of the visitors, below the ground level in view of reducing the prominence of structures. Inside the holding rooms facilities required for attending medical treatment, feeding etc., are provided.

The Zoo Hospital has good quarantine facilities, post mortem and equipped laboratory to provide good health care to zoo animals. Likewise, the zoo store is equipped with good store racks to keep food grains, and other materials. Feed to the animals will be supplied through vehicles in fibre-glass containers.

The Zoo has setup Animals Rescue Center to rehabilitate good number of animals rescued from the circus. Now the animal are proposed to display in a 35 acre land of Safari Park.

The message of conservation of nature and highlights of wild animal in epics of Ramayana and Mahabharatha is displayed with texts of epics in front of each animal enclosure. This is the first of its kind in the entire country.

The Zoo possesses a very good fodder plot for cultivation of fodder, vegetables, fruits etc. required for the animals.

Eight members of gardeners maintain the plot.

The maintenance of the Zoological Park is carried by sixty numbers of animal keepers, gardeners, sweepers etc. working on contract basis, and seventy number of Staff and Officers.

Group discussion with S.V. Zoo Curator, Doctor, and Staff enriched the knowledge of our keepers in effective management of captive animals. The visit also provided an opportunity to the keepers of both the zoos to exchanging their views, experience and problems in handling of captive animals and up keeping of enclosure.



Learning different techniques to handle captive animals

After completing the Zoo visit, the team visited small deer parks situated all along the roadside of Tirumala, as well as gardens, museums and famous temple of Lord Venkateshwara at Tirumala and Goddess Padmavathi Temple at Tirupathi.

Though the zoological park is situated in the world famous pilgrimage center, it is not attracting so many visitors due to lack of publicity and conveyance facility to zoo. Presently the development and maintenance of the zoo is mainly depending on the revenue from the entrance fee of visitors and grants from the Central Zoo Authority. The annual revenue of the entrance fee is around Rs.9 Lakhs. Hence minimum facilities are provided to their keepers.

The zoo possesses a very large space and environment required for conservation and rehabilitation exotic wild animals. Utilizing modern technology in the field of advertisement and publicity, facilities available at Tirumala, providing public conveyance facilities, and the schemes to attract visitors would result in increase in the revenue, required for developing the zoological park into a model zoo for the next generation.

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