

Central Zoo Authority Preparations in hand for CBSG and WAZA conferences Sally Walker*

The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has desired to host an annual meeting of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) and the Annual Conference of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) for some time now. They put up their bid for these events a couple of years ago and have been preparing ever since. The hosting of CBSG and WAZA is no small event. CBSG draws up to 200 members attending their meeting and WAZA over 300 members.

The host makes all preparations for lodging the events and the participants that is a big job and the CBSG and WAZA executives select the array of venues and hotels made available. This year it has been decided that WAZA will meet in the Ashok Hotel and CBSG will convene at the Lalit Hotel. As usual practice CBSG will convene first, this year from 30 October through 2 November and WAZA will convene from 3 through 6 November.

A *grande* plan for CBSG/WAZA participants is currently under final inspection with options to sign up for exciting tours before and after the CBSG/WAZA events. Anyone who knows anything about India knows that all stops will be pulled out and Hospitality with a capital H will reign. Sri B.S. Bonal, Member Secretary of Central Zoo Authority for some years now, is driving the process with his efficient staff, NGO's associated with zoos, retired but still dynamic zoo directors and previous Member Secretaries of CZA, e.g., Sh. S.C. Sharma (the first Member Secretary who as Jt. Secretary to the Ministry worked tirelessly to push through the creation of CZA itself), Sh. P. R. Sinha, Sh. Brij Raj Sharma and now B.S. Bonal.

Central Zoo Authority was kind to appoint the writer as an Advisor and to the now frequent meetings to discuss the CBSG/WAZA Conference. As I live in USA now, I can't make all the meetings but I can keep up through Agendas and



B.S. Bonal, S.C. Sharma, and P.R. Sinha -- all having served as Member Secretaries chatting during lunch. Brij Raj Sharma, also an M.S. is not in this photo. (Photo by S. Walker)



Who can ignore a baby tiger if he is right there in your path. Not me, that's for sure. This little fellow was removed from his Mama by cesarean section, a first time for the NZP vets. He is being fed goats milk, the correct for many animal babies both domestic and wild. He is very sturdy considering his birth ordeal and his few days of life (Photos by Amitabh Agnihotri, Director, NZP)



*Managing Trustee/Executive Director, Zoo Outreach Organization, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Email: sallywalker@zooreach.org

Minutes. As I was visiting my office in Coimbatore in February and March, I was pleased that CZA Member Secretary Bishan Bonal scheduled a CZA meeting for the Conference Committee while I was en route via Delhi to Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The meeting consisted of members of the committee and associated persons who discussed a variety of topics. In addition to the basic functions of any conference, e.g. the nitty gritty topics, presentation, working groups and plenary session that must take place, CZA also has plans for the Social and Cultural programmes "To be announced, TBA" events that India created centuries ago. It is interesting to note that already there have been 15 meetings of CZA to discuss the upcoming events. There may well be 15 or more meetings before this important event. It must be as good as good can be ... call it excellent!

A range of publications are planned including a history of the Central Zoo Authority, a compilation of all the Indian zoos, technical presentations by Indian zoos, special issues of the Indian Zoo Yearbook, a special issue of ZOOS' PRINT, and a special issue of the *ex situ* activities of Central Zoo Authority.

After the official meeting, participants continued to chat over a nice lunch provided by CZA and gradually disburse. I was keen to see the National Zoo and invited myself to join Sh. Agnihotri, Director of the National Zoological Park, in a round. All over the zoo there was activity to bring on improvements. Sh. Agnihotri has been the Director of NZP for over four years and he is carefully monitoring the many projects going on to upgrade this significant zoo. Work was going on in several places with a goodly number of workers both from the zoo and from outside contractors.

NZP is literally the "national zoo" of India and, like a kindly rich uncle, represents all the other zoos. Ironically, NZP goes through periods of time that do not do it or



CZA Member Secretary, B.S. Bonal using flip charts at the National Zoo grounds to show the works required and other things to the Core Committee of the CBSG/WAZA event. (Photo by Brij Gupta)



Dr. Gerald Dick, Executive Officer, of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums visiting Delhi Zoo to see the animals. Dr. Dick visited India to select a hotel and insure that everything would be as perfect as possible for the Annual WAZA Conference. Photo by Brij Gupta.

its reputation as representative much good. One of the reasons for this is that it is directly under the concerned Ministry in Government of India that is, like many other bureaucracies in every country, hideously slow to act.

It is hoped that Ministry of Environment & Forests and Government of India will find ways to overcome this delinquency

and provide sufficient help for NZP to complete the renovation. Directors of zoos around the country have offered to gift or loan mammals and birds to the National Zoo to augment their assortment of wild animals to insure there are enough for conference visitors to enjoy.

The writer cum Editor will try to provide monthly updates on the progress of this project ... it will be one of the more memorable activities of the Indian zoo community for many years to come.

Dr. Gerald Dick, Executive Director of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums touring the National Zoological Park. He is joined by Bishan Bonal, MS CZA and Amitabh Agnihotri, Director, NZP (Photo by Brij Gupta)



Below: Bonal, Dick and Agnihotri visiting the holding cages attached to the exhibits, where the zoo staff brings the animals in at night. Photo by Brij Gupta.



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Below: National Zoo has a very large number of Manipur Brow-antlered Deer. It is hope to restock Manipur Deer population in appropriate location soon. Photo: NZP.



Lion-tailed macaque coming to the water to drink. (Photo by Brij Gupta)

