

Teachers for Tigers goes to Bangladesh

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Introduction and Background:

From 20 February to 04 March, a series of three 'Teachers for Tigers' workshops were organised in Bangladesh inviting school teachers, NGOs, zoo personnel and educators from in and around tiger range areas of Bangladesh. These were organised by the Zoo Outreach Organisation (ZOO), Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Forest Department in collaboration with Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society (WILD), Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai, and The Guide Tours Ltd.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service, Rhino and Tiger Conservation Fund and Wildlife Conservation Society sponsored the entire programme which was conducted at three different venues viz., Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, The Sundarbans and the Dhaka Zoo, Mirpur, Bangladesh.

As has been previously reported in ZPM, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) / Bronx Zoo, USA has developed a tool for teaching using tigers as a theme, providing a manual 'Teachers for Tigers' with different ideas for exciting, informative and interactive teaching modules about tigers and other animals.

The objective of the programme is to educate trainees about the different educational methods such as games and activities using tigers as an example, the importance of tigers and their conservation and the importance of suitable habitats and the need to preserve forests to protect tigers. The programme also aims to train and develop creativity in trainees by making them prepare materials and mini-dramas as well as to get trainees to cooperate and become involved in group activities and discussions.

Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh was the main host and coordinator at national level for all workshops. Apart from selecting and inviting workshop participants, WTB looked into workshop logistics and translated TFT English manual into *Bangla*, local language of Bangladesh. WTB is a national institution committed to conserving the biological diversity of Bangladesh. It organizes action-programmes for the promotion of sustainable natural resources management, economic self-reliance, and environmental sustainability through its six working units, Threatened Species Conservation Unit, Natural Resources Management Unit, Wildlife Health Unit, Habitat Restoration Unit, Capacity Building and Extension Unit and Awareness Building Unit. Asiatic Society of Bangladesh is a non-political, non-government and non-profit association established in 1952.

Venues:

The first of this workshop series was conducted at the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh from 20-22 February 2005. The Asiatic Society of Bangladesh is committed to the study of 'Man and Nature of Asia'. The President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is its chief patron. The inaugural of the first workshop was conducted in a very simple way with Professor Emajuddin Ahamed, former Vice Chancellor,

Dhaka University and President Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Professor Mahfuzur Rahman, General Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Md. Anwarul Islam, Chief Executive, WTB, Mr. Enayetullah Khan, Chair person, Mrs. Nalini Mohan, WCS and Sally Walker, ZOO on the dais. A total of 44 participants mainly teachers handling students of age group 11-14 years attended the workshop.

Second Workshop: Sundarbans, Bangladesh:

Most of the programmes of this workshop was conducted on a boat from 24-28th February 2005 utilizing the travel time from Dhaka to Sundarbans and back. A total of 24 participants took part in this workshop. The programme started on 24th afternoon with a simple inaugural inviting Prof. M. Harunur Rashid, WTB Trustee as the chief Guest. The programme was planned in such a way that all the participants gathered on 24th afternoon and the entire team boarded the boat to Sundarbans after inaugural and introduction to the programme. While traveling to Sundarbans the team spent first three nights on the boat utilizing the day time for the workshop programme covering most of the activities on the boat and a day on the island. The remaining activities were covered while returning to Dhaka. The Sundarbans mangrove forest covers an area of 5770 sq.km of land and water, is a part of the world's largest delta, which has been formed from sediments deposited by the great rivers Ganges and Brahmaputra that converge on the Bengal basin. Sundarbans is home to many different species of birds, mammals, invertebrates, reptiles and fishes. The entire Sundarban forest comprises the largest remaining tract of habitat for the Royal Bengal Tiger, *Panthera tigris tigris*.

Third workshop: The Dhaka Zoo, Mirpur, Bangladesh

The last workshop of this series was organized at Dhaka Zoo from 02-04 March with participants mostly having zoo and veterinary background. About 29 participants attended this workshop. Honourable Minister Mr. Abdullah Al Noman, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, was the chief guest for the inaugural function. The other guest of honour on the dais were: Mr. S.A. Khalek, Parliament Member, Dr. Salehuddin Mahmud, DG, Department of Livestock service, Ms. Sally Walker, ZOO, Mrs. Nalini Mohan, WCS and Prof. M. Harunur Rashid, Trustee, WTB.

Agenda:

The agenda, basically, was the same for all three workshops but with some necessary minor changes suitably made to fit the participant's interest, particularly with reference to zoo educators. However, the programme covered all four units of the Teachers for Tigers manual. In the Sunderbans workshop few activities such as pugmark technique, activity on observation were conducted after

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reaching the Island. In the zoo workshop, since most of the participants were involved in zoo education, many programmes were conducted in front of animal enclosure with an explanation to show how the activities can be modified to educate about other animals in the zoo. Trainers along with Nalini Mohan, WCS conducted all activities.

Summary of the main activities of all three workshops held at Bangladesh

Introduction (know each other): Introduction of delegates to other participants was done through an activity called 'Sound off'. The participants issued a card carrying animal names and the sound of the animal. The participants were asked to make the animal sound and find a partner of the same animal. Then they were asked to give the details of the partner for other to hear. Details like name, subject, name of institute and the animal they like were provided.

Workshop themes and materials: The workshop theme was explained to all the participants. The agenda was also discussed briefly for the participants to understand the programme well and be ready for the activity.

Evaluation: The objective of evaluation is to assess the audience how the programme affects people's knowledge of tigers and their attitude about them. Different evaluation methods suitable for different audience groups were explained to them. One or two exercises like concept map and attitude assessment were practiced. This exercise was done before and after the education programme.

Tiger in culture: Tiger, in many countries, is a symbol for their culture. The objective of this activity is to make the participants understand how tiger is involved in our culture. The participants were asked to list examples of the use of the tiger as a symbol of culture in relevance to arts, stories, games etc. This is a group activity in which the group with high score tops the rest.

Tiger Range: Yesterday, today and tomorrow. This is an exercise with map of tiger range countries designed to introduce the audience about the dramatic decrease in tiger habitats and populations as a result of human intervention. The participants assembled three maps issued to understand the tiger habitat and population of the past, present and the future. This was a group activity where the group came up with the list of countries that had tigers in the past and the present range and its habitat.

From Little cats to Big cats: Observing domesticated cats to learn about tigers. This is an activity to make the participant understand and to create interest to appreciate tiger adaptations and behaviours. This objective was achieved through a series of fun exercises where participants learnt about tiger habits, features and behaviour (hunting, teeth pattern and functions, running, camouflage etc.).

Mini Drama: The mini dramas are designed to introduce aspects of tiger biology and conservation. This is a fun way method to learn about tigers. The participants were divided into groups and assigned four themes like hunting, parental care, courtship and poaching. Each group keeps

their subject as a secret until they play it. The viewers of the drama were asked to identify the theme of the drama.

Tiger Time line: Tiger time line is to create an illustrated tiger history until now. The participants were given a series of dates that has links with tiger history and they were asked to present the details as an illustration. All the creative posters made in that way were pasted against a wall and exhibited.

Project Tiger Map: Under the project Tiger in India more than 27 tiger reserves have been formed that help in the conservation of the species. This exercise was to understand the location of existing tiger reserves in India. However, there are no tiger reserves in Bangladesh. The map activity was modified to understand the existing National Parks and protected areas in Bangladesh.

Feeding Ecology: Protecting the prey species of tiger is critical for tiger survival. Feeding ecology is an activity to make the audience understand that the health of predators is depending on the availability of the prey species. The participants were given an example of the annual requirement of the tigers that live in the Nagarhole National Park based on the actual study conducted by scientists.

Census techniques: For effective conservation steps in a national park or protected area it is essential to know the number of individuals in a given area. The participants were informed about various techniques and methods used by scientists to do censusing. The participants learned about tiger pugmark method, counting tigers by camera trap technology, and also the method to track tigers using radio tracking method.

Resource round up: The resource round up is a game designed to understand to dramatize the crucial link between human population and species endangerment.

International Tiger Conservation Conference: This is an activity to make the people understand the efforts needed around the world in terms of research, habitat protection, creating awareness, and law enforcement. The participants were divided into groups and asked to prioritize the actions provided to the groups according to the needs of the subspecies in which they need to work. The group was asked to assign marks for each action according to the immediate need of the species and a global tiger conservation strategy was developed.

Nagerhole Citizen debate: A hypothetical situation about tiger human conflict was given to each working group which they had to enact from their own perspective as creatively as they could. This was a very exciting session in which participants of all the workshops could enjoy.

Designing an activity: This is an activity modified exclusively for the zoo educators. The most important aspect of the teachers for tigers tool is its flexibility. The activities can be adapted to any animal and can be creatively presented to understand aspects related to the animal. Certain topics written with tiger as theme was selected and asked to develop an activity taking examples of a different animal in the zoo. Participants came up with creative education ideas.

Pledge: At the end of the workshop all the participants were asked to put their pledge on the pledge card supplied along with the registration materials. All the participants were requested to read their pledge loudly at the time of valedictory function.

Evaluation

The Teachers for Tigers workshop was conducted especially for the teachers living in and around tiger range areas to learn more about new teaching tools to teach about the "The World's Big Cat", there by promote its conservation.

The trainers, in order to achieve the objective of the workshop and to help understand the concept, introduced many teaching tools and also educated them about tigers by means of indoor and outdoor activities.

At the end of each workshop, participants were asked to fill in an evaluation form to get a feed back from them about the workshop. The following questions were asked in the questionnaire issued:

- What were your two favorite activities? And why?
- What were your two least favorite activities? And why?

- Please tell if this programme is relevant to your work and how?

- Will you be permitted to implement what you have learned when you return to your place? If "no" what are your obstacles?

- Do you have any suggestions for future workshop?

- Any other comments - (complements or criticism equally valuable)

The over all response of the participants showed that all of them enjoyed all three workshops and learned many things that they can practice. Most of the participants appreciated activities in Unit I that has Assessment Strategies, Life of a Tiger Mini-Dramas...., Tiger Ranges: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow...., From little cats to Big cats, Tiger Timeline. However, zoo personnals appreciated Unit 4 as well that has Global Problems, Global Solutions, Subspecies Grab Bag, Resource Round-up, Tiger threats Mini-Dramas, International Tiger Conservation Conference.

All the participants also expressed that the knowledge gained in the workshop can be shared or practiced in their respective places when they return.

List of participants of the Bangladesh TFT workshop series

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (44)

Md. Insan Ali, Teacher, Dhaka
Mohammad Ali, Sr. Teacher, Dhaka
Rowshan Ara Akhter, Headmistress, Dhaka
Begum Anwara, Sr. Teacher, Dhaka
Shahana Ahmed, Teacher, Dhaka
Amit Euranus Anjus, Teacher, Dhaka
Rizwana Ahmed, Asst. Teacher, Dhaka
Surajit Baruah, Research Scholar, Assam, India
Joydeep Bose, Programme Officer, New Delhi, India
Jihosuo Biswas, Field Biologist, Assam, India
Dilip Chetry, Conservation Biologist, Assam, India
M.R. Deedar, Senior Teacher, Dhaka
Suprio Chakma, Research Assistant, Dhaka
Ethel Das, Teacher, Dhaka
Sk. Md. Nurul Huda, Assistant Teacher, Bangladesh
Sikha Rani Hazra, Senior Teacher, Dhaka
Md. Osman Farhan Al Harun, Scholastica, Dhaka
Rizwana Haque, Teacher, Dhaka
KM Zahidul Hasan, Teacher, Dhaka
Shahadat Hossain, Teacher, Dhaka
Shirin Hasnat Islam, Scholastica, Dhaka
Md. Nurul Islam, Senior Teacher, Dhaka
Shazia Khan, Teacher, Dhaka
Awadhesh Kumar, WL Resr. & Guest Lect. Arunachal, India
Md. Abdul Mannan, Senior Teacher, Dhaka
S.M. Abdul Matin, Senior Teacher, Dhaka
Shyamal Chandra Mandol, Asst. Teacher, Bangladesh
Sangita Mitra, Sr. Project Officer, West Bengal, India
Rekha Medhi, Lecturer, Assam, India
Kamrun Nahar, Asst Teacher, Khulna
Mary Kamrun Nahar, Lecturer, Dhaka
Rahat Nilofer, Teacher, Dhaka
Mahmuda Nazma, Sr. Teacher, Dhaka
Khandaker Shahida Parvin, Sr. Teacher, Dhaka
Md. Mahmud Rahman, Teacher, Dhaka

Simelia Afroz Rumki, Teacher, Dhaka
Mizanur Rahman, Jr. Lecturer, Dhaka
Md. Shamsur Rahman, Con. of Forests Wildlife & Nat.Con.
Maksudur Rahman, Prgm. Co-ordinator, Khulna
Rezia Quadir, Communicator, Bangladesh
Md. Abu Bakar Siddique, Sr. Teacher, Dhaka
Kazi Nasrin Suravi, Asst. Teacher, Bangladesh
Shama Shamsheer (Izzat), Dhaka
G.S. Solanki, Sr. Lecturer, Arunachal Pradesh, India

The Sundarbans (24)

Md. Sikander Ali, Teacher, Dhaka
Md. Abdur Rahman Miah, Asst. Teacher, Dhaka
Md. Abul Khayer Mir, Asst. Headmaster, Dhaka
Bilkis Begum, Teacher, Dhaka
Joydeep Barua, Scholastica, Dhaka
Rabeya Begum, Lecturer, Narsingdi
Md. Abdus Samad, Asst. Teacher, Khulana
Md. Abul Hossan, Asst. Teacher, Satkhira
Dilruba Afroze, Teacher, Satkhira
Arun Kumar Goswami, Teacher, Bagerhat
Rahima Ahmed, Headmistress, Dhaka
Moshtaqur Rahman, Prof. Dhaka
Sayeeda Khanam, Teacher, Dhaka
Jannat E Ferdousi, Teacher, Dhaka
Mohammad Yaqub, Teacher, Dhaka
Abdullah Al Mamun, Teacher, Dhaka
Sarmin Sultana, Teacher, Dhaka
Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Prof. Dhaka
Mohammad Ali, ACF, Chittagong
P.O. Nameer, Asst. Prof. Trissur, India
C Srinivasulu, Research Associate Hyderabad, India
J. Vasantha Sheela, Z.O.O, Coimbatore, India
B. Ravichandran, Z.O.O, Coimbatore, India
AHM Ali Reza, Lecturer, Dhaka

Dhaka Zoo (30)

Syed Ali Ahasan, Scientific Officer, Dhaka
Md. Waliur Rahman Akand, Zoo Officer, Dhaka
Md. Abul Kalam Azad, Lecturer, Bangladesh
Narayan Chandra Banik, Deputy Curator, Dhaka
Khudesta A. Begum, Upazila Livestock Officer, Dhaka
Ranjan Kumar Biswas, Principal Scientific Officer, Dhaka
Md. Mongur Morshed Chowdhury, Vet.officer, Chittagong
Md. Amimul Ehsan, Asst. Prof. Bangladesh
Md. Rayhan Faruque, Associate Prof. Chittagong
Md. Shafiqul Haque, Professor, Sylhet
Md. Mehedi Hossain, Sr. Scientific Officer, Dhaka
Md. Azharul Islam, Officer In-charge, Dhaka
Md. Rafiqul Islam, Zoo Officer, Dhaka
Rakibul Islam, Asst. Professor, Dinajpur
Mohammad Abdul Kalam, Supervisor, Rajshahi
Abu Syed Md. Kamal, Publicity Officer, Dhaka
Md. Ikramuzzaman Khan, Curriculum Specialist Dhaka
Shawkat Imam Khan, Asst.Conr.of Forest, Bangladesh
Ratan Kumar Mondal, Zoo Officer, Dhaka
Bequm Noorjahan, U.L.O., Dhaka
Shimona Annoor Quazi, Lecturer Dhaka
Md. Golam Rabbani, Secretary, Bangladesh
Matiur Rahman, Vice Principal, Barisal
Zahed Md. Malekur Rahman, Vet. Surgeon, Bangladesh
Mohammad Mazibur Rahman, Zoo Officer, Dhaka
Md. Atiar Rahman, Vet. Surgeon, Dhaka
Md. Hasibur Rahman, Prgm. Co-ordinator, Dhaka
Arabinda Kumar Saha, Deputy Curator, Rangpur
Md. Shahiduzzaman, Upazila Livestock Officer, Dhaka
Md. Mahbubur Rahman Swapan, Prgm. Co-ordinator, Dhaka

Resource Person

Nalini Mohan, Intl. Teacher Trainer, WCS, New York

Trainers

Payal Molur, Go Wild Workshop, Coimbatore
Amit Chavan, Project Coordinator, BNHS, Mumbai
Gigi K Joseph, Nature Edu. Officer, PTR, Thekkady
R. Marimuthu, Education Officer, ZOO, Coimbatore
B.A. Daniel, Scientist, ZOO, Coimbatore

Interns

Gawsia W. Chowdhury, WTB, Dhaka
Farhana Ruma, WTB, Dhaka

Zoo Outreach Organisation

Sally Walker, Founder/Hon. Director Coimbatore
Sanjay Molur, Deputy Director, Coimbatore

Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh, Dhaka

Enayetullah Khan, Chairman, Dhaka
Md. Anwarul Islam, Chief Executive, Dhaka
Prof. M. Harunur Rashid, Trustee, Dhaka
Afroza Yasmin, Programme Officer, Dhaka
Warda Mobassera, Research Assistant, Dhaka
Nurul Basar Sarker, Programme Officer, Dhaka
Md. Shahriar Mahmud, Research Assistant, Dhaka
Mahmudul Hassan, Research Assistant, Dhaka
Mehrab Chowdhury, Research Assistant, Dhaka
Israt Jahan, Research Assistant, Dhaka

People for Primates

Teachers for Tigers training workshops followed the Hoolock Gibbon PHVA which was reported in the last issue of ZOOS' PRINT. Field researchers for primates and others informed that in many grant proposals they were required to include a significant education component in order to get the grant for field studies. In fact this is a very good development although not easy for field biologists perhaps.

With that in mind, a number of the field biologists who had attended the Hoolock Gibbon PHVA were invited to stay back and attend the first workshop of Teachers for Tigers which was held at Asiatic Society. There were eight participants in this workshop who were not teachers as such but field researchers learning teaching techniques which they might either pass on to other educators or use themselves in their own teaching work.

A special booklet called "People for Primates" was prepared by Education Consultant Payal B. Molur which used some of the principal activities from the Teachers for Tigers Manual and some of the material from Zoo Outreach Organisation's Primates in Peril and Primarily Primates educational packets. The booklet was given to the primate researchers and also to selected participants in the 3rd session of Teachers for Tigers, which was held at the zoo.

In the Report above one of the modules focuses on the topic of using Teachers for Tigers exclusively for the zoo

educators. The Teachers for Tigers tools are very flexible and can be used with a little information and imagination for any animal ... in the wild ... in the zoo ... wherever.

While we at ZOO and WILD certainly appreciate tigers, we believe that the "World's greatest cat" has enough friends and we prefer to devote our efforts to the less charismatic, neglected "mini vertebrates and invertebrates".

The preparation of this booklet and addition of these themes in Teachers for Tigers for the first time signifies a new emphasis for Teachers for Tigers workshops. In truth, the Teachers for Tigers programme should be called something like "The Tiger and his Friends" -- world's greatest cooperation !

