Safety week conducted at Maitri Baugh Zoo

Ganesh Dubey * and Kalaichelvan **

Safety Week in the Town

Safety week was observed in the Town Administration Department of Bhilai Steel Plant. During this week discussions, workshops and lectures were held in various departments and safety was stressed on all areas of working. The Standard Operative Practices (SOP) to give more stress on "Safety for 24 hours" was emphasized.

Safety Week in the Zoo

In the zoo three major components of safety were identified, they are as follows:-

1. Zoo staff safety, 2. Visitor safety, 3. Animal safety

1. Zoo Staff Safety:

(a) Before going to work with the animals, the SOP should be observed.

The following observations should be ensured when the staffs working with animals, e.g.

- whether cages/enclosures are locked or not,
- position of the animals,
- which area is required to be cleaned,
- where the animal should be kept.

On the other hand, after working with animals, the staff should know proper locking of the cages and enclosures as well as keeping of the materials away from the animal.

(b) Staff sanitation and hygiene : Before and after working with the animals, the staff's should properly wash their hands, legs etc., to ensure proper disinfection.

2. Visitor Safety:

Visitors should be informed about the safety measures to be adopted when visiting the zoo.

3. Animal safety:

(a) Safety from visitors: The zoo animals should be kept away from the visitors by providing the barrier wherever necessary.

(b) Forbidding visitors to feed and tease the animals and preventing of indiscriminate littering.

(c) Proper sanitation: The animals should be given proper sanitation by cleaning the cages, providing environmental enrichment, etc.

(d) Proper designing of the enclosure/cages to avoid escaping of the animals, keeping in mind safety of the animals etc.

During the technical session, general safety to avoid accidents, steps to provide first aid and how to keep primary health were also discussed. A training demonstration on uses of various fire extinguishers for fire fighting was given by the Fire Officer. Debate, painting and slogan competitions on 'safety' were organized.

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Zoo Education Activities in Thiruvananthapuram Zoo

C.S. Yalakki *

The Thiruvananthapuram Zoo is one of the oldest Zoos in India established in 1957 as an adjunct to the famous Napier museum by the Maharaja of erstwhile Travancore State. As any such old facilities, it is characterised by animals being displayed in cement floored, iron-barred, dingy and congested cages without showing any concern for even basic requirements in terms of animal housing, upkeep healthcare etc.

The Thiruvananthapuram Zoo has been subject to transformation with the financial support of the Central Zoo Authority since 1998 to improve the basic facilities as much, if not more than what are in existence for visiting public. While the real animal lovers are happy about the progress of implementation of modernisation works in the Zoo, a large chunk of visitors, on the contrary, are discontent about nothing being done for adding new animals to the 'Show-Cages'. The Thiruvananthapuram Zoo has focused more on the education of public than ever before.

1. Conservation education classes:

Regular classes are organised for the School/College students, public groups since October 1999. The target groups are given half a day classes followed by a free visit to the Zoo. Wildlife and its importance, Wildlife Conservation with special reference to Zoos etc. are the core subjects covered. The response is encouraging.

2. Audio-System:

Audio tapes containing appeal to visitors regarding hazards of plastic and other non-biodegradable materials, feeding, molesting and teasing of Zoo animals and the relevant penal provision in the Wildlife (protection) Act 1972 have been prepared and played at the Zoo entrance frequently, especially on festival days when Zoo is overcrowded. This has had tremendous impact on the visitor behaviour in the Zoo.

3. Fortnightly interaction sessions:

Interactive sessions are organised once every fortnight in our newly renovated auditorium. Topics related to Wildlife Conservation, Environment health, Cultivation of ornamental and medicinal plants, Museum display etc. are selected. Department staff in Museums, Zoo, Botanical Garden, Members of NGOs, Nature Clubs participate in the sessions. The programmes are anchored by experts in the related fields who render their service as labour of love. The sessions would last for 1.5 to 2 hours and would include presentations, slide shows, discussions etc. The programme was started since 14th February 2001 and has been going on consistently. Advance publicity is given in leading newspapers about the date, topic and resource persons to ensure maximum participation.

3. Wildlife film shows and exhibition:

Wildlife film shows are organised first Friday of every month in collaboration with the World Wide Fund - Kerala in the Auditorium located in the Museums and Zoo premises. Similarly Wildlife photo exhibitions are organised frequently supported by the renown local Wildlife photographers.

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News ! of Kamala Nehru Zoo, Ahmedabad

Kamala Nehru Zoo, categorised as a "Large" Zoo by Central Zoo Authority has developed new facilities beneficial for both animals in the zoo as well as staff-and visitors. The closed circuit T.V. reported in this issue is the first time for an Indian zoo. The Earth Tube Heat Exchanger reported in Zoos' Print, Vol. XVI, No.5, May 2001to lower the temperature for animals during summer has inspired a Mechanical Engineer to share his experience for the sake of small and low budget institutions. The zoo, located in Gujarat at the site of the immense earthquake earlier this year and zoo staff, experienced interesting behavioural phenomenon by animals which Superintendent, R. K. Sahu has reported along with other instances around the world.

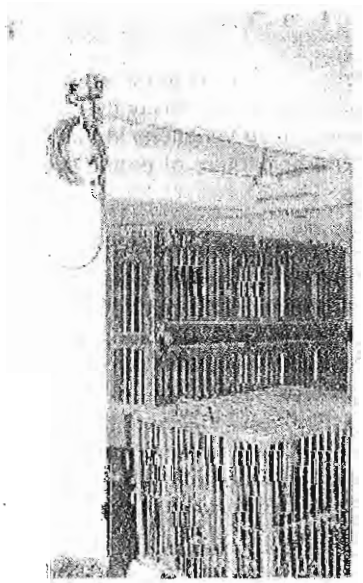
Closed Circuit T.V. in Ahmedabad Zoo

Dr. R.K. Sahu *

Keeping and managing wildlife in the the current context is very difficult. People are very much aware about animal rights, especially when Discovery, Animal Planet, and National Geographic Channel have done such an excellent job of creating wildlife and animal welfare awareness.

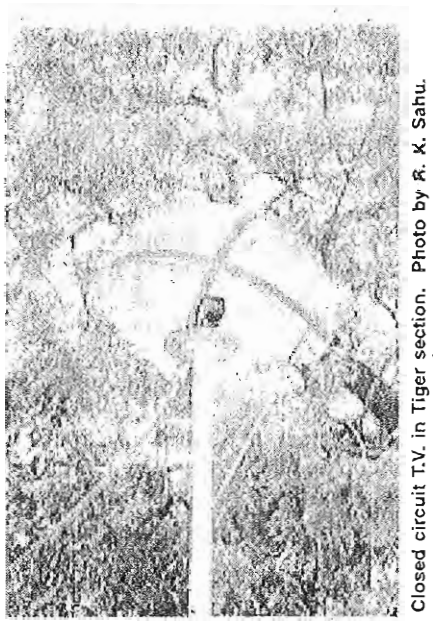
For the first time in Indian zoos, Ahmedabad Zoo has provided closed circuit T.V. system (from 22nd Jan 2001) to observe animals and their behaviour. This system is highly useful for the following purposes:

1. **Animal behaviour:** To understand the animal's behaviour and attempt to modify the enclosure in the animal's interests.



Closed Circuit T.V. in hospital with flexible wires for shifting it as per requirement. Photo by R.K.Sahu.

2. **Sick animals:** This system is highly useful when animals are admitted into the hospital because, whenever anybody goes to observe the animal, the animal will change its behaviour as a result of the observation. It feels disturbed. With these cameras, we can observe the actual behaviour of a sick animal without any distubance



Closed circuit T.V. in Tiger section. Photo by R. K. Sahu.

3. **Visitor management:** Zoo personnel can observe visitors with this device to avoid feeding and teasing of animals, as well as to catch mischief-makers of other kinds in the act.

4. **Education and research:** It is also a very good tool for education and research purposes. Zoo personnel can set up observation of animal behaviour around the clock. This may be particularly useful when trying to understand nocturnal animals biorhythm or breeding behaviour.

5. **Recording behaviour for future study:** We can also record the behaviour of animals when an observer is not available. Special behaviour of animals can be shown to visitors by recording these event.

6. **Visitor education:** This system can be used for showing animals to visitors, providing a monitor near the signage describing the animal. In this way visitors can see the animal in a special situation, such as a mother tiger with cubs, without disturbing the animals in any way.

At present we have provided only two cameras one inside the hospital and the other in the lion-tiger-leopard section with flexible wire, so that we can use our camera in any animal enclosure or section. During the earthquake, in particular, these cameras were extremely useful to us to observe animal behaviour. In the event of severe damage and escape of animals, these monitors could provide an early warning which would facilitate an early, and lifesaving response.

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