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-FOREIGN MAFIA RUINS PAK AGRICULTURE

-KARACHI 10 YEARS BACK

-POULTRY VACCINES IMPORTS WORTH RS 6B ANNUALLY

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Pakistan Wildlife News

Issue VIII, Volume 3

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Eublepharis macularis

Call for saving depleting marine resources

Environmentalists called for protection of marine resources and demanded reliable scientific data for planning and policy making about marine.

A danger siren has been rung for decreasing marine resources in Pakistan by environmentalists at the closing ceremony of the project 'Marine Fishing Vessel Census in Pakistan', organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWFN-P) at a local hotel on Saturday



evening. This one-year project is a joint effort of WWFN-P and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), funded by Marine Fisheries Department, Sindh Fisheries Department and Baluchistan Fisheries Department. It aims to conduct a framed survey of marine fishing vessels and sites and available fishing services, implemented in Sindh and Baluchistan, July 2010-June 2011. Capacity building, scientific infrastructure establishment, fish stocktaking, vessel census and catch monitoring are some of the steps which have been taken while defining conservation requirements, and designing and implementing a fisheries monitoring system are future perspectives. While providing an overview of the survey results, FAO's Chief Technical Advisor Paul Fanning identified the growth in number of vessels from 6,488 in 1986 to 15,000 in 2010, with a reducing growth pattern predicted.

FAO representative in Pakistan Kevin Gallagher remarked that the implementation of the globally recognised Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries needs attention by member countries, including Pakistan and fishing communities need to manage their own resources. Deputy Director General WWFN-P Dr Ejaz Ahmed stressed on a deeper understanding of our resource.

Director Sindh, WWFN-P Rab Nawaz deliberated on WWFN-P marine and conservation initiatives in Pakistan and noted the absence of any marine protected areas in the country. He stated that WWFN-P always works in partnership and connects people and wildlife. Director General, Marine Fisheries Department Shaukat Hussain highlighted the contribution of the survey information in fisheries management and development. President Sindh Trawlers Owner Association Habibullah Khan identified the need for assertive action against use of illegal fishing net for sustainable fisheries resource use. Director General, National Institute of Oceanography, Dr. Shaukat Hayat, shared efforts and benefits of improved knowledge of fishing activities and recommended focus on a national level integrated coastal zone management ICZM policy and **planning through stakeholders' partnership**. Project Director, Fisheries Resource Appraisal Project in Pakistan, Marine Fisheries Department, Wasim Khan, appreciated the collective effort of project partners. In the closing session, certificates were awarded to tag lottery winners, whose vessels were enumerated and tagged during the census.

(By Haris Hanif on August 01, 2011 from Daily Times)

BNHS releases revised edition of book on subcontinent's birds

Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) released the new book on bird species on Saturday. Birds of the Indian Subcontinent - A Field Guide, deals with 1,251 species of birds from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and the islands of Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and Maldives. Almost 28 years after ornithologists Salim Ali and S Dillon Ripley first published A Pictorial Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent (1983). BNHS released a revised edition of the book.

Bird lovers and field researchers take this book at birds watching events to identify the winged creatures accurately by their scientific and common name, size, color, plumage, beak, nesting and migration patterns, habitat, ecology and all important description of specific birds. "Interest in bird watching has increased over the years. Sitting in the forest and spotting birds is a form of relaxation. It also helps in creating awareness which ultimately helps in conservation of birds," said Daniel, vice president, BNHS. .

This was missing in the first edition. Taking into account changes in the common names of birds, the authors have listed both **the old and new common names along with the scientific names to avoid confusion**.

(01 August 2011 from Hindustan Times)

Fight against environment degradation top priority

KARACHI (NNI): Sindh Minister for Electric Power, Shazia Marri has said that fight against environment de-gradation is among top priorities of Pakistan Peoples Party and its government which will continue its efforts to aware masses to combat environmental threats. This she said while addressing as a chief guest to 8th Annual Environment Excellence Awards-2011, organized National Forum for Environment & Health (NFEH) here at local on Saturday. Chairman Intellectual Property Rights and former Federal Minister Environment. Hameedullah Jan Afridi presided over the event while Senator Rukhsana Zubairi, Chairperson, Pakistan Engineering Council, Dr. Kaiser Waheed, Chairman, M. Naeem Qureshi, President NFEH, Shams-ul-Haq Memon, Consultant, Coastal Development Authority, Sindh and others also addressed the event.

Shazia Marri further said the present government is very much determined on the issues of environment as President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari himself has been Federal Minister for Environment. She agreed to the idea to make part the environment as a part of educational syllabus and said that until the mothers will not educate their children to become a responsible citizen, with regard to keep surroundings/ society neat and clean, the country will not get rid off the environmental problems. She said that it is high time to work for the change of attitudes in every individual to develop Pakistan green and clean and further stressed for the need to protect and nourish the nature which is gifted to our nation by Allah almighty.

Hameedullah Jan Afridi briefed the participants of the event about the measures of the Federal Government taken so far to cope with the environmental issues. He said that at present polythene bags are big source of pollution in the urban areas and announced that soon a package in the shape of tax remedies will be given to polythene manufacturers to provide them alternatives of job/earnings. He said that corporate and business sector should realize their responsibility and play significant role to overcome pollution. Hameedullah Jan Afridi said that massive concessions have been offered to the industries so that they may easily import or procure required gadgets. Senator Rukhsana Zubairi and other speakers were of the opinion that

the global temperature has decreased by 0.6 C in past 100 years and such deficit will rise further up to the end of present century by 1.4 to 5.8 C. They said that the Pakistan was also facing problems due to retreat of glaciers, increase in frequency of extreme events being observed since recent years in shape of floods, droughts, cyclones and earthquakes causing catastrophes and economical losses and precious lives and property. They emphasized the need of more investments in renewable energy technologies and by adopting climate changing and mitigating efforts. In this regard the speakers suggested measures to initiate waste and effluent treatment plants, usage of great potential of solar, wind and wave energy resources to address present energy crisis. Other speakers also addressed and presented suggestions for environmental up-gradation in Pakistan.

Later on 69 awards were given away to the personalities of public and private sector on their endeavors for environmental protection awards recipients are; ICI Pakistan, Packages, Engro Power Gen, Lal Pir Power, NRL, Nestle Pakistan, OGDC, Qarshi Industries, Siddiq Leather Works, Rafhan Maize Products, Siemens Pakistan, Engro Fertilizers, Environmental Management Consultants, Café Student Biryani, Pepsi Cola, PRL, Total Atlas Lubricants, Aga Khan University Hospital, Getz Pharma, Bestway Cement, Presson Descon International, Syngenta Pakistan, GSK, Lucky Cement, Dalda Foods, Attock Cement, IIL, Roots School System, SSGC, KSB Pumps, Sapphire Textile, PICT, Novartis Pharma, Pakistan Cables, National Cleaner Production Centre Foundation, Dawood Hercules Chemical, KAPCO, Tourism Promotion Services Pakistan, M. Muhammad Shafi & Co, **PTCL, Dr. Essa's Laboratory, Crescent Bahuman, DADA Enterprises,** Fauji Cement, Master Textile, BHP Petroleum, Abbott Laboratories, Engro Corporation, Dawlance Group, Pak Arab Refinery, United Marine Agencies, Lahore Compost, D.G. Cement, BOC Pakistan, Prime Cables, Procter & Gamble, Pak Suzuki Motor, Interdesign FMC, Landireno Pakistan, Descon Engineering, KESC, Prime Liquid, Habib Oil Mills, AVM Chemical, Imtiaz Enterprize, Port Qasim Authority, M.Com Advertising Company and Tuwariqi Steel Mills.

(01 August 2011 from Frontier Post)

Ban on livestock export a boon for some

The Pakistan leather industry wants a complete ban on export of livestock. But there are also a significant number of businessmen who hope to make a killing in the livestock and meat export business. Which industry will get its wishes fulfilled is something that is still to be seen as the ministry of commerce has sent the proposal of banning live animal exports to the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC).



The leather industry has a long-standing demand to ban live animal export to Afghanistan and Iran, saying that this causes acute shortage of skins – a basic raw material of leather industry.

The ministry of commerce last week issued a notification which said that the government had placed a ban on the export of live animals along with meat exports. But, after a gap of five hours, the ministry issued another notification saying that it was just a proposal and the final decision will be taken by the ECC.

Central Chairman Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) Khursheed Alam said that the government should immediately ban live animal export to western neighbouring countries. He clarified that tanners were not against the export of meat as this has little impact on the availability of skins. **“We need skins,” said Alam, “Meat exports do not affect us as skins of slaughtered animals remain in the country.”**

However, Ministry of Commerce intends to ban both meat and live animal exports.

Head of research Standard Capital Security Faisal Shahji said that though it is feasible to ban live animal export, it may further increase smuggling of animals across the western borders after the sharp **increase in meat prices in Iran and Afghanistan.** **“Even after all the limitations, the ban on live animal exports would be beneficial for both meat exporters and leather industry of Pakistan as both get cheap raw material,” he said.**

On the ban on meat exports, he said it seems that the government wants to bring stability in local meat prices ahead of Ramazan and seeking a ban of few months. South Chairman PTA Aziz Ahmed said that government itself now acknowledges that huge numbers of live animals are being smuggled to Afghanistan and Iran. Pakistan exported over \$53 million of meat and meat preparations in year 2011, he said, adding that according to rough estimates, live animals worth of over 10 times of our meat exports are smuggled every year from Pakistan, he said.

“Our biggest problem is the smuggling of live animals not the meat exports. We can overcome much of this problem if we ban export of live animals,” Ahmed

said. Another leather goods exporter from Karachi agreed with this and said that the leather industry is primarily hurt by the exports of live animals and not by growing meat exports.

“Pakistan is now earning huge foreign exchange from its packaged meat exports. This industry should be encouraged so that we can grow our market share in growing Middle Eastern markets,” he added. **Pakistan’s proximity to Middle East gives it an edge in export of meat and other food items.**

Officials at the Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP) say that Pakistan has great potential in meat production and meat exports are bound to increase phenomenally in coming years.

(By Farhan Zaheer 01 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Govt asked not to interfere in trade of animal, meat

Farmers and breeders want free trade mechanism for the export of beef, mutton and the live animals. THE Livestock Farmers and Breeders Association (LFBA) has demanded the government not intervene in free trade of live animal and meat.

“Pakistan has been blessed with one of the finest livestock breeds of the world, both for milk and meat production,” said Hamid Malhi, Director LFBA, on Monday while talking to this scribe. He added that livestock contributed significantly to the national gross domestic



product and its growth on consistent basis was only possible if **livestock farmers got adequate monetary benefits.** “Any move to ban export of meat and animals will hurt the interest of farmers, he maintained.

LFBA Director Hamid Malhi was of the view that most of the rural population owned livestock to meet their cash needs on sustainable basis, as it was their only source of earning cash more often. He added that the average size of livestock per family was one to two animals. As the present federal government has given permission to export meat and live animals, these poor farmers have been able to get due return for the first time on sale of livestock animals. He said rising price of mutton and beef should not be controlled by imposing ban on animals. Instead, the government should take measures for increasing production of animals, he added.

(On 02 August 2011 from The News)

Roads, flyovers playing havoc with environment, court told

The Peshawar High Court on Tuesday put on notice the Peshawar Development Authority (PDA), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and provincial ministry of environment in a writ petition challenging some mega projects in the provincial capital terming it environmentally unsafe.

A notice was issued by after preliminary hearing of the petition, filed by Citizens for Clean Environment (CCE), a group of civil society organizations. A two-member bench, including Justice Shahjehan Khan Yousafzai and Justice Nisar Hussain Shah issued the notice.

Environmental issues were mainly focused in the petition. The petitioner stated that ongoing projects of roads and flyovers on the University Road and G.T. Road were taking a toll on the remaining few old trees and green belts in Peshawar.

The CCE comprises of Kalash Environmental Protection Society, Frontier Heritage Trust, Sarhad Conservation Network, Gandhara Hindko Board, De Laas Gul and Institute of Architects of Pakistan. Advocate Syed Haziq Ali Shah appeared for the petitioner and requested the bench to stop work on these projects till final disposal of the writ petition. He contended that the government had not conducted the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of these mega projects which was in violation of section 12 of the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act, 1997. Environmental Protection Act, 1997.

He contended that the government had to submit a preliminary environmental review of the reasonably foreseeable qualitative and quantitative impacts on the environment of a proposed project to determine whether it was likely to cause an adverse environmental effect. The respondents in the petition are the ministry of local government through its secretary, provincial ministry of environment through its secretary, the Peshawar Development Authority through its director general and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency through its director general. The petitioner stated that the local government minister never got tired of talking about Rs8 billion development projects including road widening and flyovers in Peshawar district but in fact such projects threatened the physical and mental welfare of the citizens as these deprive them of green belts and trees sustaining a healthy environment.

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The CCE said a huge USAID fund meant for the uplift of historical gardens was being misused owing to lack of professional advice.

It is stated that the government had totally forgotten that Peshawar had over 3,000 year old heritage and they were committing a crime by disfiguring and ruining its aesthetic and historic identity. It is added that these projects would also affect the centuries old City Wall, which was a heritage of the inhabitants of the city.

(On 02 August 2011 From Down news Paper)

Foreign mafia ruins Pak agriculture

Pakistan has been taken to the cleaners by our erstwhile friends. As all agriculture secretaries, I was given a number of facilities to go to USA and to be brain washed to their way of thinking. The west was keen to tell us what we should do and we lapped it all. They were the demi-gods that told us that famine was upon us and just as now they are telling us that UG99 is here.

Chemical agriculture that is based on the fear and havoc that was created for **Pakistan in the 1960's continues today. The astronomical prices and the increased toxicity of the soils that has come about is the result of the west's selfish minds.**

These minds are still active. If you think that chemical fertilizer has allowed us the right to food security then I am afraid you need to have your head examined. The west is improperly selfish as the meeting of the G-7 will and do indicate. What has happened as a result of this brain washing at CIMMYT the wheat center is that the people used to visiting and those that benefited from these visits became their slaves and agents. They were unable to get out of the master-slave mentality.

Wheat is a commodity that the USA is surplus in and it wants to market that commodity and who can blame them for their thinking. I would be doing the same if I were in their shoes. It is up to the developing countries to determine their food security.

The chemical approach is a USA based chemical fertilizer approach. It is not a singleton approach for they have ensured that they will have a measure of organic matter in the soils that may vary from 2 to 3%. In our case, our representatives never even thought of that. There in the USA the Rodale farms and the likes of Wendell Berry have forced the governments hand to ensure that the organic matter is not lost to the agricultural system. Let us compare the two systems and see what has happened in our case. The loss of comparative advantage has left us in debt and the purchase of phosphates and potassium fertilizers at a cost that is detrimental to the economic system. If to that we add the cost of inefficiency

and corruption the obvious answer is the destruction of **the farmer. The game is to make the farmer's life difficult** and to give them the run around. I tried to give them a mobile lab and found that I could not get around the human behavior

issues that the government/lab functionary created. The chemical fertilizer is

supposed to be plant specific and to meet the plant needs not the soil needs. The chemical macro fertilizers have no trace or minor elements and these as everyone knows are important for productivity. The chemical fertilizer cannot control nature and that is why we have a proliferation of pests and more chemical pesticides.

The increase in cancer and the collie that is hitting the western world and to the glee of the medical world whose market is dependent on how many people they can see **under the doctor's knife. Is the USA development anything** to be proud off? I do not think for they have the maximum amount of cancer and the use of 80000- chemicals. The USA is now re-determining its options.

The unintended consequences are horrendous. No human has the capability to determine the unintended **consequences of what they have done. The 'development concept' is actually a weird form of development in which** the excluded have now started to question the ploys used. Poisons are used on a calendar basis and at one stage the cotton industry was using 70% of all pesticides in Pakistan. Cotton pickers were women and they were the worst affected. The affect of all this was not only the fertilizing balancing was out of sync but the environment was also not in conformity with natural systems. In the case of creating a mafia the system was made to go through an elaborate system of controls so that the university mafia was equally compensated by human behavior and graft. The current evidence is that the Plant protection department where the graft is exorbitant is the one that has maximum attention of the power structure that is corrupt. The current position is held by an incumbent who is from the post office department rather than the chemical agriculture side.

Continued...

What are the benefits of the organic system? Contrary to belief in chemical agriculture there is as much as 70% non-fertilizer content-or inert matter. Whereas inorganic agriculture the fertilizer content is 100% and there is no inert matter. Using chemicals makes the soil porous and unable to hold water. This has led to enormous demand for water for agriculture when the fact is that this water is only 12% efficient. The biggest advantage is that this kind of agriculture works within the natural systems. Do you know the amount of financial resources that were allegedly filtered away? I am working on the evidence and when I finalize my evidence there will be hell to play.

Pakistan wants a lot of reasonable policies and it will await these in perpetuity unless we take care of the CIMMYT mafia where ever it is. It has proliferated to unimaginable positions. Meanwhile if you want cancer and cancerous material all you have to do is buy vegetables that have been sprayed 17 times. Try egg plant or try a chicken that has been inoculated and that carries the residual medicine for 72 hours? Choice is between the best of the worst.

(By Dr. Zafar Altaf On 02 August 2011 From Pakistan Observer)

Fish dying mysteriously in Chotiari Reservoir

Since the beginning of 2011 many countries have reported the unexplainable deaths of large quantities of fish as well as animals, and **now fishermen operating in lakes that form Sindh's Chotiari Reservoir** are facing a similar problem as fish are mysteriously dying in this water body as well. But unlike the global phenomenon, locals have an idea why this may be happening while the government has remaWhile there is no way for community members to be sure of the exact reason behind the sudden demise of their only source of livelihood, they all agree that this is an unprecedented phenomenon and is due to **some sort of contamination of the reservoir's fresh water. There are** 14 villages that house a total of 60,000 residents, all of which depend solely on this reservoir for their livelihoods. The community has some

1100 small boats operating in the area which spreads over 18, 000 hectares.

Sangar district's president for the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF),

Hussain Mallah, told The News that the organisation had received complaints about large schools of fish found dead in Jadupur as well as Seri Lake which were two of the 60 small lakes and ponds located between the sandy hills dividing Nawabshah and Sanghar districts within the **Chotiari reservoir. "It is 25 kilometer vicinity in which fish were**

reportedly dying in the last one week. Local fishermen caught fish that were already dead and were emitting a foul odor. Since then the **community has been concerned about these waters," he said.**

Mallah, who belongs to the largest fishermen community of Phulel, explained that the dead fish have left locals without a means to earn their bread and butter which has forced many to travel elsewhere in search of a better livelihood.



According to him, the government may have a hand in the **contamination of the reservoir's fresh water. "The authorities have** installed five tube wells to collect saline water outside the reservoir **which they then inject into the fresh water body from different points,"** he explained. In addition to destroying habitat for fresh water fish, releasing saline water into the Chotiari Reservoir was also leading to seepage in the surrounding areas which reportedly increased salinity to a 160km area, destroying fertile land and forcing communities to **relocate." We have informed officials at the local fisheries department**

Continued...

about the situation but they have not bothered to visit the area to collect samples for further analysis. They do not have experts that have the knowledge or skill to identify the reason and then take measures to **save the community's livelihoods," he said.**

Mir Hassan Mari, who also monitors a community livelihood project in the area, confirmed that they also received reports over the past few days of fishermen fearing that they may lose their source of income at the hands of a mysterious disease claiming the lives of large quantities of fish. According to some complaints, people were catching fish that looked sick and were also smelly so they were thrown back into the water, posing a danger to other species. He said that they were currently trying to raise awareness amongst the community about the negative impact of tossing the sick fish back into the water. Ayoub Mallah, a local fisherman, complained that concerned government departments did not bother to take local communities into confidence with respect to the treatment of saline water.

"We are stakeholders in this area but nobody comes to us to ask us what to do. The area in which we have been living for generations is under threat as well as our livelihoods. This inconsideration and neglect is obvious from the fact that despite our complaints, not a single official has come to review the situation," he said, adding that the issue was not restricted to the fish themselves but also to community members who may face health problems from using contaminated water .

Despite of the fact, that current satiation was unprecedented, no government laboratory exists, which could assess and examine the situation of Chotiari Reservoir to find out the reason of dying fish and the nature of water contamination.

When The News contacted officials from the Sindh Inland Fisheries Department Hyderabad, they confirmed that the unavailability of any laboratory facility that was needed to rest the fish and propose measures to counter the damage and investigations told that they do not have any plan to work for finding the solution.

(By Jan Khaskheli on 04 August 2011 from The News)

Non-availability of raw skin, hide causes closure of units

Non-availability of raw skin and hide has forced most of the small and medium tanneries in Pakistan to close down their operations, Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) said Tuesday.

Almost 2 lac people are facing jobless situation due to the export and smuggling of live animals and this number can be increased if the situation continues.

Chairman PTA Khurshid Alam exposed the facts in the letter to PM Yousaf Raza Gilani and demanded for permanent ban on export of live animals and wet blue leather from Pakistan. Alam hoped that early announcement of complete ban would facilitate the local industry in procuring the raw materials for meeting its export demands for fetching precious foreign exchange.

Agha Saiddain, Chairman PTA Skin and Hide said that around 20,000 live animals were still being smuggled from the country on a daily basis. **"According to Federal Bureau of Statistics, export stood at \$1.220 billion in 2002-08, \$0.959 billion in 2008-09 and \$0.862 billion in 2009-10," he added.**

Agha said the upward trend of exports of 2010-11 was mainly because of higher prices of leather in International market and quantitative increase was not much. The smuggling of live animals a month was inflicting a loss of more than Rs 7.5 billion to national exchequer besides causing huge raw material shortage to second biggest value-added export sector of the country.

Leather industry of Pakistan in manufacturing sector is providing jobs to 500,000 people and contributing 5 percent in manufacturing GDP—which depends on byproduct of meat and beef.

Leather sector was facing a shortage of raw material severely for meeting the domestic as well as the export demand of leather products.

The burning issue of the export of live animals legally from Pakistan **to Iran and Afghanistan also came under discussion in the MoC's** meeting. Due to the high prices of beef and meat an average Pakistani family cannot afford to eat meat and beef as a result Pakistan was declared protein deficient nation by UNIDO.

(By Razi Syed on 04 August 2011 from Daily Times)

Climbing high to bring down game

Animals like the Dagestan tur of the Caucasus Mountains of Azerbaijan or the mouflon sheep of the Balkans in Croatia are not well known. But both are among the dozens of uncommon and unusual species lifelong Summersville resident Mark Hampton has had in the crosshairs of a scope before pulling the trigger and watching them drop during his adventures traveling the world as a mountain hunter. Growing up in the deer and turkey-hunting hotbed of south-central Missouri, Hampton grew to love hunting on outings with his father.

While Hampton has also made many hunting trips to the plains and savannahs of Africa, it's the high-elevation hunts for various species of goats, sheep and ibex that really get his juices flowing.

"In a way I wish I had never gone sheep hunting, because those mountains have a special allure," Hampton joked. "It's difficult, it's challenging, but it's so rewarding to be in the mountains and to see God's creation and experience that splendor."

Pursuing his trophies has led Hampton up and down steep mountainsides on all six continents. The total number of countries he has taken game in at all elevations is 26.

His traveling and climbing efforts have resulted in taking 30 varieties of wild goats around the world, as well as 15 species of sheep, eight species of chamois, all three existing species of tur, and the American mountain goat.

Hampton has hunted at an elevation as high as 15,000 feet in the Himalayan Mountains of Nepal.

Most of Hampton's high-elevation trophies have been taken with a long-range handgun. His mountain hunting firearms are usually single-shot pistols chambered for high-intensity cartridges (such as .308 or .284 Winchester) that are capable of traveling long distances.



Traveling to remote, far-away places to hunt has often put Hampton in the position of dealing with language barriers.

Hampton's wife Karen has accompanied him on several hunts and has taken wild game herself.

The pair has hunted together in mountains in Pakistan, Nepal, Turkey and other high locations.

Hampton also sometimes hunts with other friends and acquaintances who are members of the small but tightly-knit mountain hunting community. While Hampton enjoys bringing home game trophies and accruing trophy memories from his world-wide escapades, he also

likes observing peoples' lifestyles in each place. As well as traveling the world to hunt in mountain ranges, Hampton has been on some 20 hunts in Africa. The trophy room of his Texas County home is lined with numerous examples of game taken in both environments.

Hampton's love of mountain hunting is documented in the pages of book he wrote titled "Addicted to Altitude: Confessions of a Mountain Hunter." It chronicles in narrative style his experiences going after game at high elevation.

"Mountain hunting books don't sell as well as African hunting books, because more people want to go to Africa," Hampton said. "Not everybody wants to climb 15,000 feet and be miserable for two weeks to get a shot at a sheep. But I felt compelled to share my experiences. And

mountain hunters don't want a 'how-to' book, they want a narrative."

The book deals with a cross section of hunters - including three women - some of whom are high-profile individuals within the realm of mountain hunting, and some who are Hampton's friends.

Included in Hampton's plans for the near future is adding a couple more countries next year to the list he's hunted in.

Even if he never went on another hunt, Hampton has already compiled enough memories to last a lifetime.

(On 04 August 2011)

KARACHI 10 years back

Contamination data derived from water birds show that concentration levels at three selected sites in Pakistan are generally lower than the threshold known to harm wildlife, both for metals and other elements, a research report disclosed.

As per a study, jointly conducted by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Pakistan Agriculture Research Council in scientific co-operation from two Spanish and Italian universities, three selected coastal and inland wetland sites were found less polluted by virtue of their bio-indicator in birds. The visiting researchers further observed that the results of the study must be welcomed for testifying a reduced environmental contamination. However, they urged that cases of local high contamination suggested possible risks requiring continued surveillance.

“It can be achieved by monitoring contamination in the same study areas at suitable intervals,” Prof Xavier Ruiz from Department of Animal Biology, University of Barcelona, shared his research study with The News on



Thursday evening. The European Union funded the study **“Coastal and inland wetlands in**

Pakistan and in China: colonial water birds as bio-indicators of pollutant levels” which completed during 1998-2000.

It was undertaken to assess pollutant levels and effects in selected coastal and inland wetlands in Pakistan and China, using egrets and herons as bio-indicators.

Prof Mauro Fasola, project coordinator from Pavia University, Italy, explained that the coastal and inland wetlands in Pakistan and China were selected for being subjected to increased pollution from industrial, urban, and agricultural sources. **“There was urgency to monitor contaminant levels to assess the effects of pollutants besides evaluating the resilience of these wetlands to pollution.”**

(On 04 August 2011 From The International News)

Spotlight: Missing the forest for the trees

“Besides providing shade for other life forms, the forest had immense benefits other than being a source for timber. But the wretched people high on greed failed to understand that. They started cutting down the forest for the land about which they carried their own plans, very different from what nature perceived for things to be. Those who could see the wrong in this were also cut like the forest when they came in the way.”

Devastation of mangrove forests from Pakistan can be a great loss for the country. It is such a precious forest, which is being destroyed by the land grabbers.

It may sound like the story of devastation of the alien planet

Pandora from James Cameron’s Avatar, but when it comes to our



The mangroves are considered as nurseries for shrimps but declining very fast due to water pollution. - Photo by Tahir Jamal / White Star

own surroundings and the ruining of our very own habitat, this is no fictional universe but a painful reality as narrated in the documentary, *Murder of Mystic*.

From football documentaries that were highly appreciated by the lovers of the game here to an eye-opener on Gawadar’s ship-breaking industry, the film-makers of Outfield Productions have now blown the lid off a very big can of worms. The subject for their fifth documentary is the destruction of Pakistan’s precious mangrove forests by the land grabbers. It may sound like the story of devastation of the alien planet Pandora from James Cameron’s Avatar, but when it comes to our own surroundings and the ruining of our very own habitat,

Continued...

this is no fictional universe but a painful reality as narrated in the documentary, *Murder of Mystic*.

From football documentaries that were highly appreciated by the lovers of the game here to an eye-opener on **Gawadar's ship-breaking industry**, the film-makers of Outfield Productions have now blown the lid off a very big can of worms. The subject for their fifth documentary is **the destruction of Pakistan's precious mangrove forests by the land grabbers**.

The fisher folk perhaps know best the importance of the mangroves as they are home to some 25 species of fish, crabs and shrimps. Then there are the pelicans, flamingoes, kingfishers and six to eight other species of birds such as cranes and ducks that pass by the mangroves while migrating to warmer climates. They serve as a feeding ground and shelter for them, but the number of resident and migratory birds is now declining due to the thinning of the mangroves.

Mangrove forests also serve as a protective shield by helping to divert cyclones. During floods people have saved themselves by grabbing on to the strong Timmer trees.

The Timmer does well in murky waters. It has a great root system that provides support and helps it to grow and stand tall in water. But **without human support, these trees won't be able to survive for much longer and that's what prompts Abu Wada of Rehri Goth to sing "Timmer jaisay podon ki khidmat karo tum din raat..."** (Plants like mangroves need your service round the clock).

Forest department should take necessary steps against forest destruction. There is a need to made and implement strict against these land grabbers and wood smugglers to protect the precious forest of Pakistan.

(By Shazia Hassan On 07 August 2011 from Down)

Yellow fever in cattle hitting production

Tick Born Diseases (TBDs) are major constraint to livestock production and health in Pakistan. The geo-climatic conditions of the country favour the growth and multiplication of ticks. Increase demand of production has lead farmers to keep exotic and crossbred cattle but these animals are highly susceptible to ticks and TBDs.

Anaplasmosis is one of the most prevalent globally distributed tick-born disease with great economic impact in cattle industry. Livestock farmers commonly call it as yellow fever. Bovine anaplasmosis (BA) is characterized by fever, weakness, severe anaemia, jaundice, brownish

urine, pale mucous membranes, weight loss, decreased milk production, abortion, hyper-excitability and mortality. Bovine anaplasmosis is usually caused by *Anaplasma (A.) marginale* while *A. centrale* is responsible for mild disease. Clinical anaplasmosis most often occurs in cattle and mortality may be as high as 80% in disease area.

Anaplasmosis is mostly transmitted by various species of tick vectors. Twenty species of ticks belonging to seven genera (*Boophilus*, *Dermacentor*, *Rhipiephalus*, *Ixodes*, *Hyalomma*, *Argas* and *Ornithodoros*) have been experimentally proved to transmit a *marginale* infection. Biting flies, blood-contaminated needles, nose tongs, de-horning instruments, ear tagging devices and castration instruments or other contaminated fomites contribute in mechanical transmission.

Anaplasmosis is divided into incubation, developmental, convalescent and carrier stages. Weakness is the first sign of disease. The clinical signs appear when erythrocytes production drops than the erythrocytes destruction. Later loss of appetite, weight loss, dehydration and jaundice appear. Jaundice results due to destruction of infected red blood cells. Cattle may become aggressive due to deprivation of oxygen. High fever, abortion, constipation and laboured breathing can be seen. Animal rapidly loose condition as the anaemia progress. Calves less than one year usually do not show clinical signs but adults develop severe disease. Recently infected adult cattle of more than 3 years of age develop most serious disease. The surviving animals require up to 3 months for complete recovery from disease. Animals recovered from clinical disease become long life carriers. The chronically infected carriers resist to subsequent clinical disease and serve as reservoirs for maintenance and further spread of infection in a herd. Exotic, high producing animals and well nourished cattle develop sever disease. Outbreaks of anaplasmosis usually occur in spring and summer. Summer out breaks are usually due to insect vectors.

Recent study conducted in three districts of the Punjab viz. Sargodha, Khushab and Rawalpindi has recorded the overall prevalence of anaplasmosis in cattle as 31.05% using competitive enzyme linked immunosorbant assay (ELISA). The prevalence of anaplasmosis was higher in crossbred cattle of more than 4 years of age during summer season. The anaplasmosis was more common in small holders than large livestock farms.

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The regional risk factors study has revealed that cattle of more than 4 year of age, heavy tick infested, crossbred cattle are significantly at higher risk for *Anaplasma marginale* infection. The Sargodha district is at higher risk as compared to Khushab and Rawalpindi.

Keeping in view the findings of the recent study in Pakistan the following recommendations are suggested for the effective prevention and control of yellow fever in Pakistan.

* Country wide extension programme should be launched for the



prevention of ticks and tick born disease (TTBDs) especially focusing small holder dairy farmers.

* Rearing of TTBD resistant breeds should be encouraged for future breeding.

* Preventive measures should be actively enforced before the start of summer season.

* Movement of cattle between endemic and non endemic areas should be monitored.

* The *Anaplasma marginale* infected carrier cattle should be eliminated.

* Improper management, stall feeding and use of unhygienic needles should be avoided.

* Economical losses and the vector role of ticks involved in the transmission of anaplasmosis should be evaluated.

* New acaricide along with alternate tick control methods should be developed.

- Large scale national epidemiological survey should be conducted for better planning and implementation.

08-10-11 Guineafowl Chicks Being Raised by Peahens at Brookfield Zoo

When it comes to raising their young, birds are known to be good and attentive parents. Raising the young of other birds is more questionable, but two Indian peahens at Brookfield Zoo have been doing **a commendable job of keeping an eye on and providing some “street smarts” to some chicks of another species.**

Two clutches of Guineafowl chicks that were incubated by Feta and Blue, two of the zoo’s Indian peahens, hatched on July 7 and July 14 and are now being raised by the two peahens. Feta and Blue have been caring for the broods, even though the chicks look, act, and sound nothing like them. Their roles have been simple: help the chicks avoid common zoo quandaries such as pedestrians, Motor Safari trams, and predators like the occasional overhead hawk. This is important since both species have free range of the zoo grounds 24/7. For instance, Guineafowl chicks naturally scatter and hide when frightened or threatened, while peachicks run toward their mother. Additionally, Guineafowl moms and chicks move as a group **and help care for each others’ young, which is the opposite of independent peafowl.** Another difference between the two species is the length of time the juvenile birds stay close to Mom. Probably much



Guineafowl Chicks Being Raised by Peahens at Brookfield Zoo

to Feta and Blue’s dismay, the Guineafowl chicks will be tagging along with them for about a year until the next breeding season, which will be in the spring. In the wild, Guineafowl tend to stay together as a flock, including the males, while peafowl juveniles tend

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Other zoos have had success with chickens incubating pheasant eggs, tried with cranes, many of which are endangered in the wild.

This is Feta's second time and Blue's first of being successful surrogate moms to Guineafowl chicks at Brookfield Zoo. Although they have free range of the entire park, the family groups can generally be found roaming near The Swamp, Tropic World, or the Formal Pool. In the wild, Guineafowl are found throughout western, northeastern, and southern Africa in open areas, including forest edges, savannahs, scrublands, and cultivated areas. Indian peafowl, also known as blue peafowl, are the national bird of India and are protected in that country. The species prefers the open forests of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

(On 09 August 2011 From The Shooper Online)

Sand Cat Kitten Born in Israeli Zoo

A rare sand cat kitten was born in an Israeli Zoo three weeks ago, and this week made its public debut. Sand cats live in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East and are endangered in many areas.



The kitten, named Renana ("joy" or "song" in Hebrew), was born three weeks ago to Rotem at the Zoological Center outside of Tel Aviv. Three weeks ago, Rotem refused to go in for the night and the next night she gave birth to Renana in the den in the outdoor enclosure.

Sand cats no longer exist in the wild in Israel and are

listed as near-threatened in their other habitats, including the Sahara and the deserts of Iran and Pakistan. The cats are solitary and live in burrows in the deep desert. They range three to six miles at night in search of their prey, which includes rodents, lizards and birds. Unlike most cats, sand cats are not territorial. They obtain all the water they need from their prey, and so avoid watering holes where predators--including humans, wolves, snakes and raptors--could threaten it.

Sand cats are well-adapted to the desert, with small bodies and long hair growing between their toes. This cushion of fur helps insulate their foot pads when walking over hot sand. Their hind feet claws are small and blunt, which obscures their tracks and makes them difficult to track.

The Zoological Center Tel Aviv Ramat Gan - Safari where Renana was born hopes that the kitten will be able to join Israel's Sand Cat Breeding Program, which plans to reintroduce sand cats into the wild.

(By Robert L. Gidley on August 10, 2011 From Thirddage.com)

Blue Whale' attracts locals

ISLAMABAD (APP) - Huge size skeleton of Blue Whale installed at Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) is attracting a large number of visitors and is real source of enjoyment for the kids especially.

The whale, almost 100ft in length, was recently taken to the capital from Natural History Museum (NHM) Karachi, as NHM was facing closure due to shortage of funds. Giving further details, Director Zoological Sciences Division (PMNH) Dr. Muhammad Rafique said many precious specimen were taken to capital Under Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NHM and PMNH.

He further said that a whale appeared at the Karachi port in 1970 and could not be returned to the sea due to its weight.

It was buried near the port so that its flesh could be decomposed in a better way.

Now its entity of PMNH, he said, adding it will further take a month to complete the project as canopy will be installed to protect the **whale from harsh weather. " We will polish the whale, paint it colourless and also fix lights inside it, so that it remains a source of attraction not only in day but also at night"**.

Rafiq further said landscaping will also be done and the environment will be made as whale is inside the sea. PMNH was established in 1976 under the patronage of Pakistan Science Foundation, Ministry of Science & Technology.

It has four principal divisions namely Botanical Sciences Division, Zoological Sciences Division, Earth Sciences Division and Public Services Division.

The first three divisions are engaged in the collection, identification and research activities pertaining to plants, animals and mineral resources of Pakistan respectively, while the latter is responsible for mass education and popularization of natural history various displays, exhibits and dioramas.

In addition various projects such as Virtual Orientation Gallery (VOG), Biodiversity Database and Global Networking (BGN) and Focus Baluchistan have also been initiated.

(On 10 August 2011 from The Nation)

CE concerned over loss of biodiversity in KP

PESHAWAR: Pro-environment body Citizens for Clean Environment (CEE) criticised on Wednesday moves to set up military camps at the cost of 'destroying' forests in Swat district.

"It's alarming that in the guise of security, the military is proceeding to develop several cantonments all over Malakand region, while destroying the remaining forests," it said in a press statement.

The Malam Jabba mountaintop, known for its biodiversity and eco-tourism "has come under the axe to create monstrous army camps," the organisation claimed.

The Federal Environment Ministry "should get into action and demand from both civilian and military officials the Environmental Impact Assessment and other legal mandates needed to work in environmentally endangered regions," the CCE said.

"If not stopped now, the ecosystems that have traditionally sustained life and livelihoods for centuries will be extinguished, which will turn local population into 'environmental refugees' forced to live in squalid camps and overpopulated cities without sustenance," the environmental body warned.

The example of the once fertile African continent should be a reminder that famine "is not a remote possibility when a region is ravaged by war," it added.

Meanwhile, the CCE welcomed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government plan for a mass transit system of air-conditioned, CNG vehicles to replace the existing polluting vehicles in Peshawar.

"Decision-makers have to be reminded that instead of spending billions of tax-payers' money on extravagant and environmentally destructive projects like flyovers and road expansions at the cost of hundreds of health-giving trees, sustainable and public friendly projects like the MTS or mono rail should be given preference," the body declared.

It said that environment sustainability and forests were 'an integral part' of human civilisation and that the destruction of the latter would eventually result in the former's disruption.

The CCE is an umbrella organisation of Institute of Architects of Pakistan, Peshawar Chapter, Gandhara Hindko Board, Frontier Heritage Trust, De Laas Gul and Sarhad Conservation Network. It works for the preservation of the environment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

(On 11 August 2011 from Daily Times)

Urban development: So what do we do about Canal traffic?

The Supreme Court has asked the Lahore Bachao Tehreek to suggest green alternatives to a road-widening project to ease traffic problems on Canal Bank Road, while indicating that it sees the project as important for city residents.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was conducting proceedings in a suo motu case and on various petitions challenging a government plan to widen a 3.5-km stretch of the road from Thokar Niaz Beg to Harbanspura.

The court directed Dr Pervez Hassan, who is mediating between the Punjab government and the Tehreek on the matter, to ensure he attends the next hearing on August 15 to answer objections raised by LBT members to a report on the project, produced by a seven-member committee that Dr Hassan set up.

Imrana Tiwana, convener of the LBT and secretary of the Lahore Conservation Society, said the seven-member committee should have been made up of experts on urban planning, engineering and the environment, but instead consisted mostly of government supporters. **"How can they give recommendations against the government?"** she said. She said that the canal and the trees on its banks should be declared an urban heritage park area.

Another LBT representative argued that widening the road would not solve the traffic problems on the road, merely delay them. **"After six months the same level of traffic will return,"** he said.



File photo shows a view of the traffic at Ferozpur Road, Lahore.

Faryal Ali Gohar said global warming was having a devastating effect on Pakistan's environment and chopping down trees would only accelerate the problem. She said that development should benefit the many and not just the few who drove cars.

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Tiwana also objected that the government had allocated funds for the project when it had been challenged in court. She said the money allocated was enough to buy 1,260 buses. It could also be better used to build footpaths and slow lanes. She said that Rs10 billion had been spent on 11 underpasses in Lahore and the money had been wasted. Justice Saqib Nisar remarked that the congestion on Canal Bank Road affected students and people who worked in offices, not just rich people. He also noted that Canal Bank Road had made possible the construction of several residential schemes, and not just high-incomes ones, but ones for the poor too.

The bench asked the counsel for the Punjab government how many trees would be chopped down for the widening of the road. He replied that they would cut 60 trees and plant alternative trees elsewhere. The chief justice observed that the judges were all concerned about **the environment and asked the Tehreek to come up with "some amicable solutions" at the next hearing.** Several NGO representatives and National College of Arts students attended the proceedings.

(From The Express Tribune on 12 August 2011)

Suspicious Deaths of Lion Cubs

Four cubs were born to a pair of African origin lions on August 7 and three of them were found dead in mysterious circumstances on August 12, while the cause of the disappearance of the fourth one was not known.

A press release issued by the City District Government Karachi (CDGK) on Friday claimed that these cubs were kept under full care and treatment. However, three of them expired and one of them was eaten up by the lioness due to its cannibalism nature.

Sources in the CDGK, however, told this scribe that these cubs died due to extreme negligence on the part of the zoo administration. It was learnt that they were kept under open sky and the last rainfall in the metropolis caused their death. They had been soaking in rain-water but the zoo administration did not take any step for their safety, as the sources said that these cubs apparently died due to pneumonia.

According to the sources, the zoo administration should have the knowledge that the lioness might eat its cub and it should have taken measures to avoid such an incident. The zoo administration has the discretion to call even the topmost veterinary doctor of the country

for the treatment of these four cubs, but nothing to this effect was done for the protection of the cubs. However, the zoo administration took immediate steps to cover up the incident.

Zoo officials are deflecting the blame from themselves, saying that the cubs were trampled to death by the lion. It is worth noting that the



In a city where human life is given such low priority, care for animals may be too much to ask for.

cubs were born to lions that were illegally brought to Pakistan and thus confiscated and given to the zoo. Clearly there needs to be some restriction on which animals are allowed into the country and the process of bringing even the most harmless pets into Pakistan needs to be strictly regulated. But the policy of handing these animals over to Karachi zoo must be reconsidered in light of the death of the cubs. The local government may also want to look at wider problems at the Karachi zoo. There have been several reports of animals being mistreated. Trying to privatize the zoo could be one solution. Also, many countries are doing away with the concept of keeping animals caged for the viewing pleasure of paying visitors. Instead they prefer keeping animals in their natural habitats so as not to cause them any undue suffering. This is where groups like the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the WWF should get involved to ensure that zoo authorities are held accountable for their mistakes. In a city, where human life is given such low priority, care for animals **may be too much to ask for. A bitter reality of our Society...! But how we treat helpless animals is also indicative of our level of humanity.**

(The Express Tribune, Dawn, The News Published on August 12, 13, 14, 2011)

Prevention: the only prime mode for containment of influenza virus infections

There was a time when influenza viruses were transmitted almost entirely by sneezing and coughing. Now, since the virus has mutated to become a stronger and longer surviving variant, it can easily spread through contaminated objects like pens, keyboards at internet cafes, stationery items in schools, and even just by touching a contaminated surface like a table or chair, where someone may have shed viruses some time ago.

Internationally-acclaimed allergy specialist Dr. Osman Yusuf shared this observation while talking to this scribe here on Friday.

Influenza virus infections — commonly called flu — have been on the increase in Pakistan for over two years now. Bird Flu, SARS, and Swine Flu are all variants of the 'common' influenza virus, with varying degrees of severity, frequency and symptoms. **"The simple flu of yesteryears with a runny or blocked nose, fever, and a sore throat, now has more aggressive presentations like skin rashes, exacerbation of asthma attacks, and stomach problems. The fever is not a predominant feature any more, and often subsides well before the rest of the symptoms," Dr. Osman underlined.**

Unfortunately, medical science does not offer a cure for viral infections as effectively as for other diseases.

"The viruses become stronger and vary during periods of transmission between humans, or in the case of animal-borne viruses, during close contacts between humans and animals".

Drawing attention to Pakistanis performing 'Umrah' during Ramazan, Dr. Osman said, "These Pakistanis will mingle with over 5 million people unprotected against influenza virus infection since influenza vaccines are produced fresh every year against the commonest strains of the virus, and will become available only after September this year." The Saudi government is reported to have issued 5.2 million 'Umrah' visas this year; of these, approximately 10 per cent are Pakistanis.

Even throughout the year, Pakistanis have been facing mini-epidemics of influenza virus infections. The last one in April-May affected many parts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. **"Since it was an unusual time for such infections, many of our doctors were unprepared and unaware, and hence resorted to treating these viral infections with antibiotics, which is not an appropriate treatment for a virus infection. It may actually just make the infection worse, by temporarily suppressing the symptoms," Dr. Osman warned.**

Shedding light on the many facets for prevention of influenza viral infections, Dr. Osman pointed out that since the virus accesses the

human body through the nose, the foremost technique is to employ all those measures, which can reduce access of the virus into the nose, and to keep ones hands clean. Frequent hand-washing with soap, use of disinfectants and hand sanitizers, and wiping of hands with a clean, rather than a dirty or contaminated towel, should be routinely practiced.

Washing the inside of the nose with a mild salt solution is an extremely effective anti-viral. It is better to make a fresh solution every time, by taking half a glass of water (about 100 ml) and putting a few pinches of salt. **"The physiological (normal) saline available in the market and commercial saline drops are not suitable for this purpose since they are just a wash and have little anti-bacterial or anti-viral activity," Dr. Osman informed.**

Application of lubricants inside the nostril to form a protective layer against viruses reaching the nasal mucous lining (mucosa) is also very useful. **"This not only guards against viruses, but also prevents access of allergy-causing substances (allergens) to the nose. Any lubricant-olive oil, Vaseline, paraffin, baby oil can be used. This should be applied as frequently as possible, but before application, the nose must be properly cleaned," the allergy specialist mentioned.**

Regarding influenza vaccines, it is important for the dose to be adjusted according to the level of exposure of a given population to influenza virus infection. Pakistan is a high endemic area, with all types of viruses coming from all over the world, but especially from Gulf countries, where there is a large intermingling of different nationalities, populations and infections.

"For high-endemic areas like Pakistan, the entire population must get vaccinated at least twice. Once, as soon as the latest form of the vaccine is available in August, September or October, and the second injection, one month after the first," Dr. Osman guided.

Certain medicines like Montelukast, commonly available in Pakistan and ranging from Rs10 to Rs100 a tablet, have also proven to be effective in preventing the severity and frequency of influenza virus infections, and preventing asthma exacerbations due to the flu virus. Research has shown that deficiency of vitamin D3 and vitamin C may make a person more prone to respiratory viral infections. The concept of using multivitamin tablets, so fashionable in affluent societies, is more of a placebo than of any real clinical benefit. One must only use the particular vitamin which is deficient, as advised by the physician," Dr. Osman advised in conclusion.

(By: Shahina Maqbool On 13 August 2011 from The News)

Conservation: SALU to set up a school of forestry

Shah Abdul Latif University's (SALU) administration met officials from the Sindh forest department to plan a school of forestry, wildlife and environmental studies.



The school will be set up at the Centre for Bio-Diversity & Conservation (CBC) SALU.

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The chief conservator of Sindh Forests, Mir Nadir Ali Talpur, briefed the university committee about the Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI) in Peshawar. It is the only national educational and training institution of forestry in Pakistan. The institute offers degrees in BSc and MSc Forestry.

It was handed over to the forest department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on July 1, after the devolution of the federal ministry of environment, under the 18th Amendment.

Talpur said that the Supreme Court of Pakistan had passed a suo motu judgment that said that each province should establish a forest institute to cater to the needs of provincial governments.

(14 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Respite: Gilgit receives first monsoon rains

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, Gilgit received one millimetre of rain on Saturday. However, the department has predicted more rains in the provincial capital during the next 24 hours.

GILGIT:

Gilgit received first monsoon rain of 1 millimeter on Saturday, after prolonged hot and dry days. The weather in Gilgit remained pleasant throughout the day.

"God has finally answered our prayers," said Saad Ahsan, a youngster who was fasting for the first time this year.

The residents of Gilgit were facing severe problems due to the scorching heat and prolonged load shedding.

"This is the 20th Ramazan in my life and the toughest one yet," said Masroor, a schoolteacher.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, Gilgit received one millimeter of rain on Saturday. However, the department has predicted more rains in the provincial capital during the next 24 hours.

The maximum temperature recorded in Gilgit was 26 degree Celsius during the day, while the minimum temperature was 20



degree Celsius.

However, experts believe that dry weather could have a negative impact on the mountainous region, which has **Pakistan's largest** water reserves in the form of glaciers.

Prolonged dry spells pose a threat to agriculture and wildlife in the area, while the forests will also suffer badly if the drought continues.

"It is a fact that the glaciers will decrease if there are less rains and snowfall, which will negatively affect the entire area," said Karakoram International University Prof Nafees Ahmed.

Contrary to the dry weather this year, Gilgit-Baltistan received unprecedented rains in September last year. The region, which is traditionally beyond the reach of monsoon rains, received heavy rainfall, which also added to the miseries of local people.

According to the regional government, the estimated losses were almost Rs13 billion. Apart from human losses, the infrastructure in G-B was also destroyed

(By Shabbir Mir 14 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Zoo chief suspended

District Officer (DO) Karachi Zoological Garden Mansoor Qazi has been suspended following the death of four lion cubs at the zoo, there remain many questions unanswered on the part of the zoo administration.

Minister for Local Bodies Agha Siraj Durrani suspended DO Zoo Mansoor Qazi on Saturday and constituted a committee to probe the matter under the supervision of Special Secretary Local Bodies Shazia Rizvi and submit a report in seven days. It is the second such committee that has been formed to probe the death of four cubs.

On Friday, Administrator Karachi Fazlur Rehman had appointed Executive District Officer (EDO) Revenue Ghanor Leghari as inquiry officer to conduct an inquiry into the incident and submit a report in 15 day.

According to sources, the suspended in-charge of the zoo, who is holding the position for the last two decades, is basically a zoologist and he does not have the qualification to know about the behaviour of different animals. Interestingly, this lion pair had given birth to **cubs in any of Pakistan's zoos after 40 years but the Karachi zoo administration's negligence turned this occasion of happiness into a sad incident by letting four cubs die.**

The authorities seized these big cats, which were imported by Osaka Traders, on the ground that they were brought into the country on an expired permission letter. The permission letter to import these lions was issued in 2007 and it expired after six months. These lions first landed in Islamabad and then they were shifted to Karachi.

(On 17 July 2011 From Express Tribune, The News Down.com)

The missing elephant skeleton

Karachi zoo's only elephant, Anarkali, died in 2006. The skeleton was supposed to be displayed in the museum but it is nowhere to be seen. The city government's Community Development Department claims that, as Qazi has been solely in charge of the zoo, the inquiry committee should also look into the missing skeleton.

City Administrator Fazlur Rehman has already directed Leghari to include all details of animals, dead or alive in his report.

Another suspicious incident to do with dead animals occurred back in **1992 when the zoo's rhino died and its horn was cut. It is also missing and the market value of a single horn is \$26,000.**

(From 17 August 2011 On Express Tribune)

Powers of Issue Hunting Licenses Transferred to Foreign Ministry

The federal government has transferred powers to issue licences for hunting endangered species including migratory birds, houbara bustard, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after devolution of the environment ministry, making the ministry more able to use it as an **effective 'diplomatic tool' in bilateral relations with oil rich Arab countries**, the sources said here on Wednesday.

Reliable sources told that though the powers to issue hunting permits were given to the environment ministry, it had literally no role when it



came to issuance of these permits to Arab dignitaries as the officials of the Foreign Affairs Ministry used to personally deal with this issue.

"Now the situation has gone from bad to worse when it comes to preservation of endangered houbara bustard because the Foreign Affairs Ministry always tries its best to please royal Arab hunters, totally ignoring the fact that continuous hunting is leading to the threat to survival of this rare bird specie," said one of the top officials who served in the environment ministry before its devolution under the 18th Amendment.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan is a signatory to various international conservation conventions, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, Convention on Migratory Bird Species, the Bonn Convention, etc, and is bound to protect the houbara bustard.

According to official data, the federal government issued 28 hunting permits to the rulers, members of ruling families and other

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dignitaries of four Gulf states to hunt the internationally protected houbara bustard during the 2010-2011 season.

Some circles alleged that once an international non-governmental organization launched a campaign to protect the houbara bustard but due to but it ended its efforts when the government awarded it lucrative contracts allegedly to avoid criticism towards the Arab hunters.

According to existing laws the hunting period is restricted to 10 days with a bag limit of 100 birds but it is generally believed that the Arab hunters pay no heed to limits set by the government and they go for over-time and over-kill.

The official documents showed that the Provincial Wildlife Department of Sindh has already informed the concerned authorities that the Arab hunters damage vast tracts of natural habitats of the birds. The sources also claimed that the Balochistan **government complained in 2010 that the prime minister's office is** pressing them to lease out land in Lasbela to an Arab dignitaries for hunting purposes.

Area measuring 540,000 sq km is allocated every year to Arab hunters — almost half of the total area of Pakistan to hunt houbara bustard. Each sheikh has his own favourite area and if any other sheikh is allocated that particular area, intense displeasure is conveyed to the host government.

The sources claimed that some years back President Asif Ali Zardari sent his special representative to an influential Arab state when its ruler formally wrote a letter to Pakistan to show his displeasure over allocation of their traditional hunting areas to other Arab hunters.

Talking to this scribe Federal Minister Samina Khalid Ghurki said the powers to issue hunting permits have been temporarily given to the Foreign Affairs Ministry because modalities are being sorted out after introduction of the 18th Amendment.

(By Noor Aftab On 18 August 2011 from The News)

Town' versus the state: Commissioner awaits report on the encroached land in Pindi

Revenue authorities in Rawalpindi are yet to carry out the demarcation of land owned by Forest Department in Loi Bher and Takht Pari. The forest department had alleged that its land was being encroached upon by a private housing society.

The forest department filed an application with Rawalpindi commissioner in June for the demarcation of its land in the two localities. According to the documents available with *The Express Tribune*, Rawalpindi commissioner formed four teams supervised by Rawalpindi chief conservator forests on June 23 to complete the demarcation and submit the final report by July 20.

Following the commissioner's notification tehsildar-bandobast (revenue official) Rawalpindi on June 25 intimated the area residents, revenue officials and the chief executive of Bahria Town about carrying out the demarcation in the two areas. Almost a month has passed since the deadline, but the report is yet to be filed. Commissioner Zahid Saeed said his office had yet to receive the demarcation report.

Bahria Town administration, on the other hand, maintains that city



administration is trying to victimize the owner and the staff of the private housing society on the call of a Pakistan Muslim League-N's Member of Parliament. They say the Opposition Leader in National Assembly Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan is trying to harass and victimize Malik **Riaz, the owner of the society, due to "personal and political reasons"**. The housing society has said that the limits of the forest land in Loi Bher and Takht Pari have already been demarcated and the department had installed polls on the boundaries of its land. It also approached the Lahore High Court Rawalpindi bench in July.

However, the court dismissed Bahria Town's petition to halt the demarcation process. In a recent press conference in Islamabad, Nisar Ali Khan vowed that he would make every effort to retrieve any government land encroached by private housing societies in Rawalpindi.

(By Mudassir Raja on 18 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Cotton likely to stay under pressure through H2 and into 2012

With the global market reverting to a surplus, Barclays believe that the Cotton prices are likely to stay under pressure through H2 and into 2012 reflected in an increasing inability to hold the \$1/lb level. After a stellar performance through 2010, culminating in all-time highs set in March 2011, the decline in cotton prices has been equally stark. A high price environment has had a two pronged effect – global supply has grown markedly, but demand has come under pressure with competition from man-made fibres.

Prices rose to a series of all-time highs, peaking at \$2.27/lb in March, **then more than halved to the year's low so far, of 93.5 cents/lb in July.** Barclays had been forecasting a decline in H2, but the magnitude of price falls has been steeper than expected.

Supply has rebounded in response to elevated prices and will take the cotton market into a surplus after recent deficits. Across key producers, only US production is estimated lower y/y despite a large rise in planted acres, due to the drought in Texas leading to poor crop ratings and record levels of abandonment. Demand has eased in response to high prices.

China's cotton imports in June came in at their weakest level since October 2010 and, despite a rebound in July, YTD are down over 13% y/y.

However, fundamentals do not bode well and Barclays anticipate further easing in prices from Q4 into early 2012, with prices increasingly unable to hold the \$1/lb level. Tactical investors have viewed ICE cotton positively; non-commercial CFTC net fund positions have



stayed in positive territory since April 2009 but net fund length has declined from September **2010's level of 55.9K** lots (the highest level since March 2008), falling to 19.7K lots in

end-April (the lowest level since July 2010). Net fund length has increased since, and at 31.8K lots in end- July, it now comprises 23% of open interest – the highest level since September 2010.

In marked contrast to 2010-11, when the production outlook was marred by downward revisions due to the floods in Pakistan, lower **Chinese production and India's temporary export suspension** followed by an export quota, unsurprisingly supply in 2011-12 has rebounded in response to the elevated price environment and will take the cotton market into a surplus after recent deficits.

The USDA estimates global production for 2011-12 at 122.7mn bales, up 7% y/y, with South Asia the source of the largest y/y growth in

production, with a record crop forecast in India and Pakistan's production rebounding after last year's floods. Across key producers, only US production is estimated lower y/y despite a 25% y/y increase in plantings at 13.7mn acres (their highest level since 2006), with the hot weather and drought in Texas (which comprises half of US production) cutting harvested acres markedly and leading to high levels of abandonment. Weekly US crop ratings data have highlighted the dire shape, with currently 40% of the US Cotton crop rated poor/very poor (compared with 9% last year), while 57% of the crop in Texas is rated poor/very poor at the time of writing.

Meanwhile, India (the world's second largest cotton producer) is estimated to have a record crop in 2011-12, although any marked rise in exports is likely to be curbed by domestic demand. Indian production was strong in 2010-11 as well: in mid-April 2010, India suspended fresh exports of cotton for a month and then put in place a 5.5mn bale export quota, which has only been removed in early August this year. Chinese effect

After weak domestic production in 2010-11, Chinese plantings have risen markedly in 2011-12, with high prices eliciting a strong supply response and Chinese farmers increasing their cotton and Corn plantings at the expense of soybeans. The USDA estimates 2011-12 Chinese production at 33mn bales – a two-year high. China has also announced that it will buy cotton from farmers, with the new stockpiling plan to come into effect on 1 September, with the price set at 19,800 CNY/t. On the demand front, China Customs trade data for 2011 so far has reflected weakening Chinese imports. Imports have been falling through the year and from March onwards reflect successive monthly **declines. China Customs trade data showed that China's net cotton imports in June at 119Kt were at their lowest level since October last year.**

While preliminary July China cotton trade data revealed a bounce higher in imports, YTD imports are down over 13% y/y. While imports have been weak over recent months, Chinese imports in 2011-12 are estimated at 15mn bales by the USDA – the second highest on record after 2005-06's all-time highs. With China announcing its latest cotton stockpiling programme, imports are likely to post modest gains although the demand outlook will also be driven by the broader **macro-economy and may imply downside revisions to China's cotton import demand.**

The USDA's August WASDE report made downward revisions to global cotton use, especially in countries active in global textile trade such as China, India, Bangladesh and Turkey. Further, macro-economic uncertainty and lower economic growth is likely to impact cotton demand more than other agricultural markets, thereby more than offsetting any firming in demand on lower prices. An elevated price environment has also meant lower cotton use and where possible a shift towards chemical fibres.

(On 18 August 2011 from Commodity Online)

PMNH serves nature lovers with environmental edu

Islamabad—More than 30 scientists of Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) are engaged in educating the nature lovers, students and general public on environment issues and importance of its protection.



Basic purpose of this education is to create awareness among people pertaining to the

biodiversity of Pakistan with special reference to environment and natural habitat degradation.

With special displays of species of plants, animals, minerals and wildlife, the museum is a major attraction for the school trips and nature lovers who get excellent glimpses of natural history with written description. PMNH scientists have discovered a number of new Plants and animal species and have published a number of research articles in journals of international repute.

Talking to APP, Spokesperson PMNH Javed Chaudhry said a large number of natural history specimens (plants, animals, rocks, minerals and fossils) have already been collected and curated. Highly productive collaboration research programmes with many foreign countries are in progress, such as those with USA, UK, Japan France and Switzerland.

PMNH has display galleries in which a number of dioramas and other exhibits are displayed.

Javed Chaudhary said “We regularly publish natural history brochures, leaflets, bulletins and posters for mass education”.

Besides this, symposia, workshops about latest natural history issues are regularly held at PMNH.

PMNH have helped in setting-up of many other musea, such as NMST, Lahore, Maritime Museum, Karachi and Children Complex, Lahore.

“We offer training courses in animal and plant collection, preservation and curation. Special courses in animal taxidermy and model preparation are also offered”. PMNH also assists in setting up of natural history corner and also design and setup large scale exhibitions and expos.—APP

(19 August From Pakistan Observer)

PFI to remain with KP Environment Dept

Peshawar—Consequent upon devolution of Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI), Peshawar to Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa from 1st July, 2011 vide Government of Pakistan, Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Division, No. dated June 29, 2011 the Provincial Government has notified that Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI) Peshawar shall have the same status and working, mutatis and mutandis, as was on June 30, 2011 and will function as an Attached Department under the administrative control of Environment Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa until further orders.

The estate, building and physical assets shall be the property of the Environment Department and shall not be transferred to any other organization except for the official requirement of the attached formations of the Environment Department.

It was notified by the Establishment & Administration Department (Regulation Wing) Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa here today.

Need to develop capacities and knowledge based system

Islamabad—Experts and analysts said the REDD+ is a new a commodity and a balanced relationship among forest stakeholders such as indigenous communities, national government and private sector would create opportunities and benefits for them.

Faisal Nadeem Gorchani, Coordinator, Policy Advocacy & Outreach, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad conducted the proceedings and maintained that the efforts of engaging the stakeholders in such a dialogue process would enable the country to develop a balanced relationship among them where one stakeholder is not taking advantage at the cost of other. Syed Nasir said the REDD+ involves capturing or monetizing the value of carbon in forests while avoiding the environmental and social costs. He said that the concept has five dimensions which include reducing emissions from deforestation, reducing emissions from forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. He said that REDD-plus mechanism is effective, efficient and equitable.

Continued...

Consistent with current usage in the UNFCCC negotiations, REDD-plus will create incentives for the full range of forest-based mitigation activities. In addition, REDD-plus finance mechanism must also create incentives for additional actions in conservation, the sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of carbon stocks, as envisioned in the Bali Action Plan.

He further defined the three phase approach of REDD-plus which enable REDD-plus at a country level.

Ingrid Nyborg said that a lot of work has been started on REDD-plus since last many years as initially pilot project was started in Brazil, Vietnam and GANA and now Pakistan would be included in future research. She said our main effort for complaint mechanism is to implement this mechanism globally. She said that inclusive and accountable forest management can be established through strong partnerships and active involvement of stakeholders. She said that REDD-plus must be underpinned by transparent, inclusive and accountable forest management based on local processes, and this demands strong partnerships for the rights and active participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, consistent with international obligations and standards such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and locally defined measures and legal systems.

Key areas of concern are the clarification and strengthening of tenure, property and carbon rights. She said that effective and efficient interventions through multi-stakeholder platforms and active engagement, where possible, should be ensured in national processes.

While giving a detailed paper presentation, Kanwar M. Javed Iqbal said the carbon is being traded as commodity worldwide and Pakistan needs to reform its forest related legislation.

(19 August 2011 from The News)

Brazilian ambassador visits Ayub Park

The ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan, Alfredo Leoni, visited the Ayub National Park at the invitation of Army Heritage Foundation Director General Brigadier (r) Waqar Gull.

It may be recalled here that in September 2010 the Government of Brazil, through Pakistan Embassy in Brazil, had donated tigresses to the Army Heritage Foundation for the Jungle World Zoo at Rawalpindi. Since then, the already present male white tiger in the zoo, named Umeed , has fathered six offspring, two from Sasha female tigress in February, and four from Polly , another female



tigress in June 2011. The ambassador appreciated the Army Heritage Foundation's efforts directed towards caring and upbringing of the animals at this critical infancy stage of their lives and

also praised the manner in which the animals were housed in environment depicting their natural habitat. While appreciating the cleanliness standard of Ayub National Park and Jungle World Zoo, the ambassador also offered to facilitate acquisition of different species of birds from Brazil, if required, which would add to the existing birds' variety in Jungle World Zoo for the benefit of visitors to the facility.

(19 August 2011 from The News)

Kishanganga to cause Pakistan Rs12b annual loss

ISLAMABAD: If the Kishanganga hydropower project being built by India in held Kashmir gets commissioned by 2014 as per the new schedule, Pakistan will be left to suffer over Rs12.1 billion annual losses (\$140 million loss) just in the wake of reduction in hydro generation by Neelum-Jhelum hydropower project. It will also be hit by a Rs421 million loss since the execution of planned agriculture development activities will also be jeopardised, reveals a study carried out by eminent water expert, Arshad H Abbasi of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

Abbasi in his study asserts that the responsibility of the above losses will lie with the adviser of MoWP and be the result of sheer negligence on his part. Bilateral negotiations on Kishanganga collapsed in April 2010 when India replied to the MoWP that the project was started much earlier than Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project (NJHEP). "This stance of India is true," the study says. Chairman Federal Commission and now Adviser MoWP kept the project on the back burner despite the looming energy crisis.

Pakistan is fighting the legal battle in the Court of Arbitration at The Hague against India on the Kishanganga project and argues that a diversion of the water by India, which is destined to reach the lower riparian country, is a clear violation of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty.

Abbasi's study reveals that the authorities in the Ministry of Water and Power have delayed the construction of Neelum-Jhelum hydropower project by 8 years. The project's detailed engineering plan

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with enhanced capacity of 969MW and amended design was completed in 1997, but its contract was awarded to a Chinese company only in 2008. This delay has provided the Indians an upper edge to complete its project first as it has completed 40 percent work on the Kishangaga project.



Pakistan, according to the SDPI study, would also sustain colossal losses in terms of degradation of environment around the Neelum Valley owing to which a reforestation development programme would be the first victim. Likewise, the likelihood of the poor dwellers of the valley that bank on fishing in the river will also be adversely affected.

The study further discloses that the worst impact of the Kishangaga project will be on four already planned hydroelectric projects to be built by Wapda, and AJK Electricity Board. The financial impact of the Kishangaga project on hydropower projects would hover at around \$74 million.

Impact on Agriculture:

The study mentions that the 4, 50,000 dwellers of the Neelum Valley, mostly living below the poverty line, are highly dependant on agriculture. Growing rice paddies along the flat plains of the Neelum River is the main crop. To meet food security needs of the increasing population, the Government of AJK has planned to irrigate an area of 6,000 acres by lifting water from the Neelum River. The river diversion will definitely hamper the execution of planned agriculture developmental activities causing a loss of about Rs421 million annually. Neelum Valley is non-monsoon area and agriculture is limited by irrigation, making it a highly food deficient area. Subsistence agriculture is the only source of livelihood.

During the lean period, water from the sub-basins can either be used for irrigation or for urban requirements. Naturally the household/ urban water requirements of the population settled along the Neelum River banks will be given preference; hence agriculture will be forgone forcibly, and the livelihood of poor farming communities living in 247 revenue villages will be adversely affected.

Impact on forestay:

Nine nurseries, having an area of 15 acres nourishing almost 3 million plants, totally dependent upon the waters of Neelum River, will dry down to death. This will badly hamper the reforestation

development programme.

River diversion will complete Change of Micro Climate along the River and pose direct threat to various junks of forests (around 32,000 acres of alpine forest blend with blunted Deodar, Kail and Fir plants). Estimated economic loss to fish production will adversely affect the livelihood of poor dwellers of the valley, most of whom are already below poverty lines.

Impact on fishers:

Brown and rainbow Trout fish, which is main species and annually more than 1,200 tons, is being sold to local and international market, earn Rs280 million and will be adversely affected.

(By Khalid Mustafa on 19 August 2011 The News)

Livestock face epidemics in rain-hit areas

KARACHI: Lives of thousands of cattle and poultry are at risk in rain affected areas of southern Sindh, as water borne diseases have shown up in the livestock of these areas.

Livestock is either dying or waiting to die as fodder has washed away in the rain.

Poultry farms have also suffered loss of millions of rupees along with fish farms, which are cleansed away, area people told The News.

Rain hit at least seven districts of lower Sindh, but four of them were highly affected including Badin, Mirpurkhas, Thar and Tando Muhammad Khan, Chairman Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Muhammad Ali Shah, who is involved in relief work, said.

Shah said that affected people were still waiting for proper relief work, which was yet to start. More than 500 villages of Badin only have been affected. **“Almost 100 percent crops and fisheries have been washed away,” he said.**

He said that people were also suffering from water borne diseases but **the government has not initiated proper relief work. “There were only announcements,” he said.**

Loss of livestock and poultry in the rain-hit area was likely to result in malnutrition of millions of people in these areas.

Analyst and Head of Institute of Social Movements Pakistan Zulfiqar Shah said affected people were at risk of developing malnutrition, as livestock was likely to be lost.

Livestock sector has emerged as a priority sector only recently on policy formulation.

The livestock accounted for approximately 55.1 percent of the agriculture value added and 11.5 percent to GDP during 2010/11.

Livestock sector’s prospective role towards rural economic development may well be recognized from the fact that 35-40 million rural populations are dependent on livestock.

Poultry sector generates employment and income for about 1.5 million people. Its contribution in agriculture value addition is 4.8 percent and

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livestock value addition is 9.8 percent. Poultry meat contributes 24.8 percent of the total meat production in the country.



The current investment in poultry industry is about Rs200 billion. Poultry sector has shown a robust growth of 8-10 percent annually which reflects its inherent potential. The government is presently executing seven (07) projects in livestock sector at an estimated cost of Rs8.8 billion. These projects have focused on promoting milk and meat production; strengthening of extension services, delivery mechanism system to livestock farmers; prevention and control of livestock and poultry diseases; up-gradation of animal quarantine services and provision of **veterinary services at farmer's door step.**

(By Shahid Shah on 20 August from The News.)

Comb duck and 17 chicks rescued, released in lake

RAJKOT: A comb duck and her 17 chicks were rescued from their precariously perched nest on the roof of a house here on Friday. Thereafter, volunteers of Bird Conservation Society-Gujarat (BCSG) released them into the Randarda lake in the city.

The comb duck or knob-billed duck (Sarkidiornis melanotos) is an unusual, pan-tropical duck, found in tropical wetlands in sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar and south Asia from Pakistan to Laos and extreme south



China. It breeds in still freshwater swamps and lakes in the tropics and is largely resident, except for dispersing in the wet season. The comb duck or knob-billed duck (Sarkidiornis melanotos) is an unusual, pan-tropical duck, found in tropical wetlands in sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar and south Asia from Pakistan to Laos and extreme south China. It breeds in still freshwater swamps and lakes in the tropics and is largely resident, except for dispersing in the wet season.

(On 20 August 2011 from The Times of India)

Pakistan may increase milk, meat production upto 50pc

LAHORE: Vice Chancellor of University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz has said one third of fodder and water are being wasted due to low potential animals which should be replaced with best genetic ones. Talking to APP here on



Sunday, he elaborated "the country lags behind in milk production due to low potential animals which give only three to five litre per animal in a day while they should meet the target of 20 to 25 litre per animal being a good milk producing country.

However, despite these shortcomings, Pakistan is the third largest milk producing country in the world".

By adopting good management practices, he added small farmer could increase 25 to 50 percent of milk and meat production.

Dr Nawaz mentioned that UVAS was a national university and making efforts for the development of livestock and producing professional manpower to benefit the national exchequer.

(By M.A Zuberi On 21 August 2011 from Business Recorder)

Timber mafia hacks down trees in Murree

MURREE (Online) - Timber mafia hacked down trees in the forest of the hill station.



Trees were cut down near the Survey of Pakistan Office late Saturday in connivance with of the forest

guards. The incident was brought to the notice of Murree DFO Javed Gul who sent a team to the site. The team confiscated the chopped timber worth Rs250, 000. Unabated deforestation has been stoking landslide besides fading the natural beauty of the hill station.

(On 22 August 2011 from The Nation)

Future of Bt cotton in Pakistan

Cotton is grown in more than 100 countries of the world. It occupies 2% of the arable land in the world. Total cotton production achieved in the world exceeds 26 million tons in the year 2009/10. Much of the cotton produced in the world is coming from high tech Bt cotton varieties. The countries which have adapted Bt cotton at economy stage or illustrated in fig. 1.

In Pakistan cotton is the big source for economy growth. From cotton, we obtained a surplus amount of foreign exchange in the form of cotton lint, yarn, garments and cloths which accounts for more than 6 per cent in GDP share. Cotton textile exports embrace more over \$7.3 billion to the national economy which is 2/3rd of the country export earnings. Seed of cotton is an important source of food for livestock and humans.

Million of small farmers, daily wageworkers and much small and **medium business's earning is directly and indirectly link with this single crop.** Therefore the progress and failure of cotton crop has not only influence the exports but also have a bad impact on socio-economic of different sectors of stakeholders.

A record cotton crop of 14.5 million bales was achieved in 2004-05 on the other hand production remained less than 10 million bales

from 1995-1999 due to out break of severe cotton leaf curl virus (CLCV). According to a survey that an increment of one million bales in cotton production gives half a percent increase in GDP.

In the late 1980s, Monsanto began development of Bollgard (Bt) insect-protected cotton by transformation containing the cry1Ac gene from *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*. The goal was to provide constitutive in-plant control of key lepidopteran pests in an environmentally friendly manner at a reduced cost. After receiving appropriate regulatory approvals, Bt cotton was launched commercially in the United States in 1996. In an effort to understand the benefits associated with Bt cotton, one should be focuses on the economic, environmental, and social effects of Bt technology.

The direct benefits documented from using Bt cotton to control insect pests include reduced use of broad-spectrum insecticide, lower farming risks and production costs, better yields and profitability, expanded opportunities to grow cotton, and a brighter economic outlook for the cotton industry. The indirect benefits that arise from the use of the crop primarily stem from the reduction in broad spectrum insecticide use when Bt cotton is used for pest control. Reducing the use of broad-spectrum insecticides in cotton produces benefits that include increased effectiveness of beneficial arthropods as pest control agents, improved control of non-target pests, reduced risk for farmland wildlife species, reduced runoff of broad-spectrum insecticides, reduced fuel usage, lower levels of air pollution and related waste production, and improved safety of farm workers and neighbors.



In 2004-05 Bt cotton was introduced in Pakistan. Five years of commercial Bt cotton use demonstrated that Bt cotton technology has achieved the goal of providing an effective tool for lepidopteran control that is safer to humans and more environmentally benign than broad-spectrum insecticides. Nevertheless, many of the benefits of Bt cotton to the environment and to society require further documentation, especially the less tangible benefits, such as increased population densities of wildlife and greater effectiveness of beneficial insects for pest control. Such studies will help to expand our understanding of the range of benefits

Continue

offered by insect-protected crops that are developed through biotechnology. In addition, an evaluation of any risks associated with biotechnology-derived pest control is necessary to achieve a full perspective on the impact of Bt cotton on agro-ecosystems, growers, the cotton industry, and society.

Overall, the Bt cotton varieties tested with in 5 years have produced profitable yields and fiber quality comparable to that of conventional varieties. Yield potential on most farms ranges from good to well **above average, with Bt cotton meeting or exceeding growers' expectations.**

*By Tariq Hussain and Dr M Nawaz Awan on 22 August 2011
From Pakistan observer*

Poultry vaccines imports worth Rs 6b annually

Lahore—**Biotechnology has become the world's major industry to produce all preventive vaccines against human as well as livestock whereas Pakistan is importing poultry vaccine worth Rs 6 billion every year.**

This was stated by Vice-Chancellor of the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz while addressing **a workshop titled, "Molecular Diagnostics" organized by the UVAS Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology.** The UVAS VC said that Pakistan could make progress by leaps and bounds by adopting new vista of research and developing sciences.

He called upon pharmaceutical entrepreneurs and businessmen to join hands with UVAS on its unique project, Lahore Biotechnology Park. **Dr Nawaz said, "Pakistan is importing preventive diagnostic and therapeutic biological for use in animals and human worth billions of dollars and only the poultry import is nearly Rs.6 billion per annum".**

Director Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology Prof Dr Masroor Elahi Baber said that molecular diagnostics facilitated the detection and characterization of disease, drug response, identification of genetic modifiers, disease susceptibility and provides key epidemiology and surveillance data.

He explained the critical importance of advancements in molecular diagnostics and its benefits to public health in the workshop.

(22 August 2011 from Pakistan observer)

Encroachments on rainwater drains cause flooding

Encroachments and cultivation on the land of natural rainwater drains have caused breaching in drains and irrigation canals, displacing hundreds of people, say local elders.

Puran Darya, streaming down from Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, into Sindh and further down into the sea, has a long history. But a few years back when the government planned to build drains, landlords and certain influential people blocked the natural flow of water by raising structures and cultivating land.

Now whenever these areas receive heavy rains, it causes displacement and destruction, say affected people in Jhudo Town, Mirpurkhas district. The town since the British era has been a major agriculture and livestock market, contributing a lot to the entire province as well as to the country. The entire town and its adjoining areas are inundated with rainwater.

A farmer Mohammed Hashim Khoso, living with a family in the newly-constructed Jhudo Sabzi Mandi, says that they are compelled to accommodate 20 families in a single room without food and safe drinking water. Belonging to a village located at a walking distance



from the camp, he said that there is eight-foot deep water and they cannot move there.

People living there say they need nothing but want the government to clean the area so they may return to their homes and resume life there. They believe that it will take more time to resume life, as water has destroyed crops and houses in the affected districts.

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Travelling from the Mirpurkhas city to Dighri, Tando Jan Mohammed, Jhudo, Nau Kot (Fort), and then to Tando Ghulam Ali, Matli and Tando Mohammed Khan, it was observed that hundreds of families displaced from their abodes shifted to nearby roads, railway tracks, safe drains and canal banks. They had valid reasons for **staying away from the government's declared relief camps, saying** that in the past whenever they moved to such relief camps in a similar situation they faced hunger and discrimination; therefore, now they do not like going there.

The recent rains followed by breaches in drains and flooding in Mirpurkhas, Badin, Thatta, parts of Tharparkar and Tando Mohammed Khan districts have caused panic in these areas.

The majority of people living on roadsides are low-caste Hindu families, who are afraid of facing discrimination at the relief camps. Poor farmers and marginalised communities, who found roadsides safe for their living with animals, share this fear.

Hundreds of families which migrated from Badin district shifted to Tharparkar and have taken shelter at sand dunes. Narrating the reason for shifting there, the displaced persons say they feared floods and used the only option to move their families to the desert zone, calling it the only safe place.

Humanitarian organisations are still reluctant to respond. The News has learnt through NGOs that the ruling PPP legislators are creating hindrances, discouraging them to give an emergency response. The legislators want the INGOs to hand over relief goods or amounts to them instead of local NGOs for launching relief work there. This phenomenon has made the affected people vulnerable to hunger and diseases.

Legislators elected from such constituencies have done nothing to **rescue their voters. "We should develop pressure on these** legislators and make them accountable, because they have failed to deliver in their own areas. We cannot stop rains but we can initiate a **campaign to stop such breaches in canals,"** said Karamat Ali, executive director of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and

(By Jan Khaskheli on 24 August 2011 from The News)

In Thar, Green Guards ensure peacocks keep dancing

Research

Karachi- The recent torrential rains have devastated many areas of Sindh including portions of Tharparkar, but for most areas of this desert district, they are a blessing. It is a time when the great Thar desert turns lush green. The cattle owners, who leave their native areas for barrage



NGO forms group of volunteers to thwart poaching attempts lands during the drought season, return along with their herds. The

Tharis sing songs to praise the "blessing of God" and celebrate rain festivals.

Even the peacocks of this desert district dance to express their happiness and display their beauty with a touch of arrogance.

The rainy season, when the desert turns green, is also the time for peahens to lay their eggs. However, it is also when poachers find the opportunity to lay their hands on these eggs and peachicks as well as adult peafowl so that they can sell them in big cities.

But to protect this valuable species of the desert, more than two hundred volunteers, who are residents of different villages in two union councils of Tharparkar, are trying to fend off the poachers. A nongovernmental organisation - the Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE) - has formed this group of **volunteers called the 'Green Guards'.** They are mostly farmers or shepherds and they wear green coloured waistcoats even while carrying out their routine tasks.

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Whenever they see someone trying to steal eggs or peachicks or capture a peafowl, they blow a whistle provided to them by SCOPE and a large number of other volunteers gather at the spot to thwart the

poaching attempt. "We have informed the Green Guards about wildlife laws and they can also contact the district officials of the Sindh Wildlife Department for assistance," said SCOPE official Bharumal Amrani.

"The Green Guards not only protect peafowl, but also keep an eye on poaching of deer, rabbits and other wildlife species of Thar," he added. The swan-sized peacocks are a beautiful bird species of the Thar desert with a colourful fan-shaped crest of feathers, a white patch under the eye and a long, slim neck, gleaming blue chest and a spectacular bronze-green train of elongated feathers. The peahen is brownish in colour, smaller in size as compared to the male and without the long feathers.

Peafowl are found everywhere in the Indian subcontinent including different states of India, but in Pakistan it is found in Cholistan, Achhro Thar (also called the White Desert), Umerkot and Tharparkar. Being the seventh largest desert in the world, Thar is the hub of several species of birds, reptiles, insects, wild animals and plants, but peacocks are its most attractive wildlife. The reducing rains, fast vanishing rangelands and repeated droughts have badly affected the peafowl population of the desert.

Apart from all these natural factors, poaching, viral diseases and selling of eggs have pushed the bird on the verge extinction. Ironically, the Sindh Wildlife Department, the World Wildlife Fund for Nature and other local and foreign organisations working for nature conservation have never bothered to conduct a survey to ascertain the number of these birds in Thar. Khizar Samoon, a retired primary school teacher of the Manserio Samoon village, told Pakistan Today that there are around 3,000 peafowl in his village alone.

He said that poaching is the main cause of the plummeting peafowl **population in the area. "The electricity poles in the desert have also killed many peafowl, as sometimes the birds climb them and get electrocuted," said Samoon. Bharumal Amrani said that peacock is the national bird of India, and in Pakistan, it is the provincial bird of the Punjab province. "However, the Sindh government has never bothered to declare it as the provincial bird or make efforts to conserve this beautiful bird," he added.**

(By Jan Khaskheli on 24 August 2011 from The News)

Varsities urged to find indigenous resources

UNIVERSITIES can play a vital role by conducting research and focusing on indigenous resources towards overcoming the challenges being faced by people in Pakistan.

This was resolved by a focused group meeting on Knowledge Exchange strategic development in Pakistan and role of academia held at University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Ravi Campus, Patoki on Wednesday, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

The meeting was conducted by British Council with the collaboration of UVAS Fisheries Department. A delegation led by Regional Higher Education Project Manager central and south Asia Ben Isaac comprised British Council consultant Jo Chaffer, British Council Manager Higher Education partnerships Sarah Pervez, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority Assistant Manager policy and planning Hameed Ullah Khan, footwear expert Javed Akhtar Mir, Project coordinator Inspire Prof Dr Muhammad Sharif Mughal and UVAS registrar Prof Dr Kamran Ashraf.

Earlier, UVAS Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz briefed the delegation about the chronicle of veterinary school that had now become the country's prestigious university. He said this institution was imparting quality veterinary education in Lahore for the last 129 years. He said UVAS was playing its effective role in the leather, poultry, meat and dairy technology. He said that the university had won research grants worth Rs 571.794 million through competition. He said the university's development budget was Rs 430 million, adding that within a short span indigenous resources were being increased from 10 to 25 per cent.

Prof Nawaz said the university had developed research collaboration and signed 21 MoUs with many international institutions to upgrade the standard of education. He said the varsity was making efforts to provide quality education.

The delegation appreciated the UVAS poverty alleviation model and discussed challenges.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nawaz said the vibrant role of livestock sector was contributing approximately 55.1 per cent of the agriculture value-added and 11.4 per cent to national GDP. Despite a plethora of challenges, he said, the livestock industry was surprisingly growing by 4.1 per cent and cattle population had grown up to 67 million in 2010-11.

Vice-Chancellor Dr Nawaz said that it was the only university in Pakistan which was conducting online examination to maintain the process of transparency

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The participants urged the academia to produce innovative mindset which would develop techniques for making money to improve the national economy. But they categorically agreed that the human resource should be equipped with basic product knowledge and know-how about the management skills. They also visited the livestock farms, dogs training and breeding centre and milk processing unit.

(On 25 August 2011 from The News)

Prospects for Pakistani mango export to US bleak

KARACHI: Pakistani mangoes have successfully made their debut on the American land, but the trade is likely to fail amid high prices of the fruit, wrote a UK-based magazine in its recent issue.

Pakistani mangoes landed at the US land last month amid much fanfare. Dignitaries from both countries attended an inaugural event



in Chicago, the USDA-approved port of entry.

Americafruit Magazine wrote that for the White House, advancing **Pakistan's mango trade by improving its production via USAID** projects, then granting it access to the US market is part of its fight against Al-Qaeda. **"By helping to develop deprived areas of Pakistan,** it hopes to prevent infiltration by Islamic extremists and thwart acts **of terrorism against the US."**

The magazine said that the historic deal looked doomed to fail, even **before shipments had really taken off.** **"Because the logistical costs** of exporting Pakistani mangoes to the US are too high to make **long-term trade viable."**

Former President Pakistan Fruits and Vegetables Exporters Importers

and Merchants Association (PFVA) Waheed Ahmed told The News that **around 60 tons of mangoes would reach the US this year.** **"It will not be big marketing this year,"** he said.

However, he said that treatment of mangoes was being done only in **Chicago, which increased the cost for other cities.** **"Treatment should be done in other cities as well,"** he said.

Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), a subsidiary of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved only Sadex Corporation for the handling of Pakistani mangoes once they arrive in the US.

Ahmad Jawad, CEO Harvest Tradings, said APHIS granted permits to eight US buyers.

USDA-APHIS has very extensive requirements and regulations, which show a lot of risk factors that could affect the possibility of mango import from Pakistan.

"Sadex has very strict conditions and it is not willing to be flexible. Things are not looking very bright unless they change their requirements," **Jawad said.**

Jawad said that under the Commercial General Liability Insurance the customer (importer) would provide Sadex with a letter of proof of insurance from a national insurance provider acceptable to Sadex with its principle office and place of business in the United States listing Sadex as an additional name insured.

He said mango export to other countries has already started and more than 150,000 metric tons of mango is likely to be exported, most of it through sea and about 22,000 tons by air.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is charging Rs285 per kg, or approximately \$3.35, for commercial shipment of mango from Lahore to Chicago which would hurt prospects of mango export, CEO Harvest Tradings said.

Jawad estimated the Cost and Freight price at \$12 per 2 kg mango carton, excluding other costs which will be born by importer in the US.

US citizens have been anxiously waiting for Pakistani mangoes since 2010 due to their exotic taste.

(By Shahid Shah on 25 August 2011 from The News)

By-laws violation: CDA's 'plot' against green area foiled

Yet another case of violation of the capital city's master plan has landed the city managers into court. Some residents of a sub-sector of the posh Sector F-11 have taken the Capital Development Author



Court stays allotments of land to CDA employees in the F-11 greenbelt (CDA) to court to foil its plan of encroaching upon a greenbelt of their sector.

Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday restrained the CDA from allotting plots to its employees in sector F-11/2. The action was taken on a petition filed by the residents of F-11 in the court challenging the haphazard allotments of plots.

Justice Riaz Ahmed Khan of IHC granted stay on the petition filed by Naseem Zafar, Abdul Hafiz and others through their lawyer Muhammad Aslam Khaki.

The court also issued notices to CDA Chairman Imtiaz Inayat Elahi, Enforcement and Planning Director of the authority, Muhammad Ramzan Joya, Chief Executive Officer Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) and Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) Director-General Asif Shuja to submit their replies on the petition.

The counsel for the petitioners contended that CDA has allotted plots to its employees in the greenbelts of sector F-11/2 in violation of the by-laws of the civic agency. Khaki said that this was a clear violation of the CDA Land Disposal Regulation, 2005. "The area has been clearly earmarked for the purpose of greenbelt in the master plan, but the civic agency is making allotments over there for residential purposes," he said.

He recalled another decision of the IHC of May 3, 2011 staying the allotments in sectors I-8, E-12, D-12, G-13 and G-14. "The illegal practice has now started in F-11," Khaki maintained. "Turning green areas into commercial centers is going to cast a negative impact on the environment of the city. Construction work should not be

allowed everywhere," he contended.

According to the counsel, the beauty of the city was already fading due to excessive construction. "The civic agency has now started construction at whatever limited green areas left within the sectors, this must be immediately stopped," he pleaded.

He urged the court to declare construction in F-11 green area illegal. Interestingly, adherence to the master plan has always been a focal point of new plans discussed by the chairman CDA. Similarly, even the Supreme Court has taken several suo motu actions over haphazard allotments and violations of the master plan. There have been several writ petitions filed by the civilians, due to which many argue the capital has been able to maintain its original form.

On 26 August 2011 from Express Tribune

Environmental concerns: Industries polluting Haripur environment

Waste from the Hattar Industrial Estate (HIE) is taxing the nearby ecosystem and putting people at risk of various diseases. Moreover, because Pakistan is a member of the World Trade Organization, products from these industries can be banned by international bodies.

Spread over an area of 1,063 acres, the HIE houses 215 operational, 378 closed, 162 under construction and 98 sick industrial units; it houses chemical, vegetable oil manufacturing, steel, paper, cement, marble, pharmaceutical, textile, poultry feed and beverages industries, which according to a report of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), are the key source of pollution in the area.

Apart from hazardous emissions by marble, fibreglass, cement, poultry feed and steel manufacturing units, most of the units do not have waste treatment facilities. The firms discharge their untreated effluent in Jhar, Noro and Dojal drains. It has been estimated that 20,000 gallons of wastewater is discharged into these drains every day.

The industrial waste then passes through more than 100 villages of Haripur and Attock; a part of the waste is absorbed by the cultivated land, while the rest ends up in ditches and ponds.

Due to the absorption of water by the land, the villagers are at a greater risk of harmful diseases such as brain tumor, bronchitis, kidney, lung and skin diseases and bone deformation, according to doctors.

Residents also complain of bad smell coming from the water, due to decomposition of solid waste and volatile organic compounds.

According to a study carried out by Rural Development Project, a local non-governmental organization (NGO), unchecked industrial waste has reduced the agricultural produce by 30 to 40 per cent, while over 20 per cent of people living near HIE are suffering from skin allergies and kidney, respiratory and eye diseases.

There have been efforts to curb pollution in the past. During the tenure of Shaukat Aziz, the former prime minister, Haripur embarked on a plan

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to mitigate pollution through establishment of the Combined Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP).

The Ministry of Environment principally agreed to establish the CETP on February 3, 2007 at a cost of Rs225 million in Phase IV of the HIE. The purpose of the plant was to bring pollutants under permissible limits.

The project was proposed to be set on two hectares, and would have been completed in three years. The annual operating and maintenance cost for the project was estimated at Rs 39.72 million, which was to be born by the Ministry of Environment for three years, be



The pollutants released by Hattar Industrial Estate are causing harm to the ecosystem

fore handing it over to HIE CETP Company.

The stake of shareholders was fixed at 50 per cent for the government, 25 per cent for Export Development Fund, 15 per cent for provincial government, five per cent each for the district government and the private sector.

The project would have reduced pollution, improved conservation of natural resources and ecological assets, rehabilitate destroyed land and reduce the health budget by 30 per cent.

However, the plan was shelved as soon as the previous government ended its term.

HIE Industrialists' Association Vice President Malik Ashiq Awan said that the industrialists are ready to contribute their share for the construction of CETP. However, he said that the entrepreneurs are paying billions of rupees to the government and it should do its bit to protect the environment.

Sarhad Development Authority (SDA) Manager Yousuf Khan said their plan for the HIE includes a treatment plant for industrial waste, maintenance of infrastructure, installation of street lights, drains and water supply.

((On 26 August 2011 from Express Tribune))

Poultry vaccines imports worth Rs 6b annually

Lahore—**Biotechnology has become the world's major industry to produce all preventive vaccines against human as well as livestock whereas Pakistan is importing poultry vaccine worth Rs 6 billion every year.**

This was stated by Vice-Chancellor of the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz while addressing a **workshop titled, "Molecular Diagnostics" organized by the UVAS Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology.** The UVAS VC said that Pakistan could make progress by leaps and bounds by adopting new vista of research and developing sciences.

He called upon pharmaceutical entrepreneurs and businessmen to join hands with UVAS on its unique project, Lahore Biotechnology Park. **Dr Nawaz said, "Pakistan is importing preventive diagnostic and therapeutic biological for use in animals and human worth billions of dollars and only the poultry import is nearly Rs.6 billion per annum".**

Director Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology Prof Dr Masroor Elahi Baber said that molecular diagnostics facilitated the detection and characterization of disease, drug response, identification of genetic modifiers, disease susceptibility and provides key epidemiology and surveillance data.

He explained the critical importance of advancements in molecular diagnostics and its benefits to public health in the workshop.

On 26 August 2011 from Express Tribune

Dengue-free Pakistan Initiative', programme launched by PMS

LAHORE: The emphasis for dengue prevention is on sustainable, community-based, integrated mosquito control, with limited reliance on insecticides (chemical larvicides, and adulticides). Preventing epidemic disease requires a coordinated community effort to increase awareness about dengue fever/DHF, how to recognise it, and how to control the mosquito that transmits it.

These views were expressed by Pakistan Medical Society (PMS) Chairman **Dr Masood Akhtar Sheikh on Sunday while addressing the "Dengue-free Pakistan Initiative", a new programme launched by PMS in collaboration with Mother and Child Trust.** "The programme is a part of the ongoing dengue awareness drive initiated by the PMS, during which seminars would be conducted to create awareness amongst the public regarding dengue,"

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Dr Masood said. The programme aims to teach people that they themselves are responsible for keeping their homes and environments dengue-free, for example, by keeping their yards and patios free of standing water where dengue mosquitoes could lay eggs.

He said that younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults. If they feel worse (eg, develop vomiting and severe abdominal pain) in the first 24 hours after the fever declines, they should immediately go to hospital for evaluation. He said that there was no vaccine for preventing dengue and the best preventive measure that could be adopted by the citizens was to eliminate places where the dengue mosquito could lay her eggs, primarily artificial containers that hold water.

He said items that collect rainwater or are used to store water (for example, plastic containers, drums, buckets, or used automobile tires) should be covered or properly discarded. He said that pet and animal watering containers and vases with fresh flowers should be emptied and cleaned at least once a week.

(On 29 August 2011 from Daily Times)

Divine bovination: How cross-breeding can save the dairy industry in Pakistan

When Shahzad Iqbal's parents sent him off to the elite Lahore University of Management Sciences, they had no idea he would one day make a living out of selling bull semen.

In many ways, Shahzad started out like a typical LUMS graduate – securing a well-paying job at a local bank and rising through its ranks to become head of consumer banking. But Shahzad was not satisfied with the yuppie dream he was living and decided to quit it all, go back to

his ancestral village in Narowal and become a dairy farmer.

Yet even though he left the hectic pace of the city behind, he kept his business school training with him. He organised his farm into a corporate structure (Jassar Farms) and focused on raising productivity. Shahzad single-mindedly devoted his attention to raise the most **important variable in dairy farming: his average cow's milking yield.** Pakistani cows yield an average of 4 litres of milk per day, much



Jassar Farms seeks to multiply the productivity of Pakistani cows by up to four times through artificial insemination.

lower than the 33 litres of milk per day that cows in the developed world produce. The standard method used by most well-capitalised dairy farmers was to import cows from the United States or Australia, which could cost thousands of dollars per cow.

Shahzad decided to adopt a cheaper alternative. Rather than importing whole cows, he began crossbreeding local cows with elite bulls through artificial insemination. He started importing the semen from the United States at a cost of between \$40 and \$100 per dose – far higher than the \$0.50-\$4 that local doses cost but much cheaper than an imported cow. Jassar Farms was able to raise its productivity far beyond the national average. But Shahzad was not happy about the input costs. He wanted to have a cheaper, local, but still high-quality alternative to American bull semen. And so, with funding from the Acumen Fund – a New York-based social venture capital firm – he started producing his own bull semen in Pakistan at a much cheaper rate than the American alternatives, using it to inseminate his own cows as well as selling the high-quality sperm to other local farmers.

The plan worked: Jassar Farms averaged 15 litres of milk per day per cow when its first cows started lactating in 2010, nearly four times higher than the national average.

While Pakistan has the eighth largest population of cattle in the world (with about 30 million heads), most farmers have only two to three cows, which produce only four to five litres of milk per day. Jassar Farms hopes that the increased productivity offered by his high-quality bull **semen will help raise the incomes of Pakistan's cattle farmers, most of whom are amongst the poorest people in the country.**

An internal analysis at Jassar Farms calculates that in just the first generation of cows born through artificial insemination, the average farmer will see their production rise by a minimum of 2,000 litres per animal per year. That increment translates into \$706 in additional income for every cow, a substantial increase given that average per capita income in Pakistan is about \$1,250 per year.

Now, Jassar Farms is seeking to partner with aid organisations such as Project Tamkeen to distribute the high-quality bull semen for free in areas that were most affected by the 2010 summer floods. Shahzad calculates that for every \$1 that Project Tamkeen spends on the semen, it will generate a net benefit of \$17.60 per year to every beneficiary.

If the model proves successful in Pakistan,

Jassar Farms hopes to take its model of social entrepreneurship to other developing countries around the world.

(By Omair Zeshan On 29 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Why three lion cubs died at Karachi Zoo and other tales of incompetence

The death of three lion cubs at the Karachi Zoo, and the disappearance of a fourth, highlights the dearth of professionals trained in the care of animals, and an apparent indifference on the part of senior officials charged with overseeing the upkeep of the **country's zoological gardens.**

The lion cubs were the latest in a long line of animal victims of human negligence and incompetence.

I was once asked by the Punjab government to determine why several of their most

expensive and rare birds kept dying in the enclosures built for them. Upon examination, I discovered that the enclosures had been designed by an engineer with no knowledge of the habits of those birds.

At the same zoo, the reptile enclosure had no heating arrangements **despite the city's** cold winters.

Many of the reptiles died of hypothermia. When I asked why there was no heating for a

cold-blooded

animal, I was told that the low-powered bulb, hanging about 13 feet above the animals, had been deemed to be a sufficient source of heat for animals most commonly found on desert sands.

Similarly, the giraffe enclosure was very poorly designed. The architect who designed it seemed to overestimate the height of the animal and made the food basket too high for the poor giraffe to reach, resulting in the animal starving for not being tall enough. Poorly designed enclosures seem to be a running theme across zoos in Pakistan. At one zoo, an elephant broke its leg when it slipped into a moat that had been meant to keep the animal in its cage. The elephant eventually had to be euthanised.

On some occasions, the thought process of zoo managements could

have been described as comical, were it not quite so tragic.

For instance, when an elephant caretaker in Islamabad retired, the government was unable to find a qualified replacement. So zoo officials decided to hire a buffalo herdsman instead. Their logic: an elephant and a buffalo are both large, dark-skinned animals, therefore the caretaking methods of both animals should be interchangeable.

Two buffalo herdsman were employed, who then proceeded to treat the female Asian elephant exactly like they would treat a buffalo from Sahiwal: spraying it with water, feeding it out of a trough and goading it to walk by beating its hindquarters with a stick.

For some time, the elephant quietly tolerated this insult to its species, but finally lost her temper when the herdsmen started eating the sugar cane meant for her. She ambushed the two herdsmen while they were

in a shed and crushed them to death.

This tragedy occurred not because of any fault of the animal or the herdsmen, but the indifference and incompetence of the zoo management.

The only personnel who should be charged with supervising the care of animals should be trained veterinarians who are comfortable around animals



Sonu and Malka playing around at the Karachi Zoo.

and not afraid of them. Zoologists or other professionals from supposedly related fields are unlikely to have the technical expertise required to manage a facility that takes care of animals.

Even veterinarians have a steep learning curve. Dr Masud, who has **spent 15 years at the Bahawalpur Zoo, says, "It took me at least 10 years to really understand this zoo."**

Suspending the director of the Karachi Zoo for the lion cubs' incident is not going to change the fact that he is not qualified for the job in the first place. It is the Karachi government that is responsible for having selected a zoologist for a job that should be done by a veterinarian. Dr Quraishy served as the Zoological Gardens director for 30 years. He is a senior environmentalist and a leading expert in animal behaviour and environmental problems.

(By Dr A A Qureshi on 30 August 2011 from Express Tribune)

Animals in zoos: our obligations

THIS is with reference to the death of some lions in Karachi zoo. The concept of zoo is based on three pillars which are conservation, education and research.

Conditions of zoos in Pakistan are pathetic. Keeping zoo environment conducive for animals is the responsibility of the public **and the government. Animals' psychology tells that they do not like to live in confinement like humans.**

Animals must have sufficient space, food, water and a suitable living environment to allow them to exhibit natural behaviour, free from fear and distress.

A poor environment fails to meet the evolutionary and ecological needs of animals in captivity and causes a serious psychological stress. For these reasons, many animals display behaviours and emotional states indicative of psychological trauma and distress. For example, self-inflicted injuries, eating disorders, infanticide, and hyper-aggression.

Teachers and parents can play a significant role by advising children to follow rules of the zoo. For instance, visitors should not **climb fences. They should not throw things to get animals' attention.**

They should not feed animals or birds and throw garbage in ponds or fish tanks.

Zoo authorities should have protocols for management, safety, health of animals. These documents would provide the best practice for animal care if directions are followed. Hazard assessments and a greater degree of accountability can also be done in the light of these scientific protocols.

An animal clinic and round-the-clock availability of veterinarians in the zoo must be ensured.

The veterinarian should review and analyze morbidity and mortality of animals on a monthly basis.

The veterinary staff must be aware of the physiology and behavior of zoo animals which are not taught in most of the veterinary schools in the world.

These animals are ambassadors of wilderness and this is not a role they have chosen, rather we have forced upon them. Zoo authorities have a moral obligation to achieve the most good out of this sad state of affairs.

(By Dr A A Qureshi on 30 August 2011 from Express Tribune)



BRC aims at emerging as a base of generating high-quality, research-based data on existing bio-resources of Pakistan, and its adjacent tracts: knowing their present status, exploitation patterns and future possible trends, along with monitoring changes in their status over the period of time. Centre aims to target all possible sectors of bio-resources, including, water, air, agriculture, forests, fisheries and wildlife resources, exploiting modern gadgets, like, remote sensing, Geographic Information System and molecular technique. Centre wants to properly study environmental problems in order to increase understanding the system controlling natural resources to develop a wiser management of such resources for the long term benefit of human race.

34 Bazaar Road G-6 / 4 Islamabad Pakistan
Phone +92 (0)51 2278044 & 2831321 Fax: +92(0)51 227 5899
Email: pbrc@pbrc.edu.pk Website: www.pbrc.edu.pk
A company established under section 42 of Companies Ordinance, 1984
Company Registration No. 00000006755/20070601