



BIERZS 2007
Bear Information
Exchange
for
Rehabilitators,
Zoos &
Sanctuaries

24th - 26th August 2007
Pomona, CA

BAITING AND SANCTUARY MAINTENANCE OF BEARS IN PAKISTAN: A STATUS REPORT

Fakhar-I-Abbas

Bear baiting is a cruel practice introduced in south Asia by British colonials, in 18th century, where a toothless and pegged bear defends the attack by entire specially trained savage dogs for at least three minutes several times a day. This practice gradually becomes a part of the rituals and such fights were organized as regional events involving both the general public, the influential; landlords, and the gypsies. The problem was very deep rooted and hence getting difficult to be totally eliminated. The bears are being maintained by gypsies, landlords, and by the government, but under all situations they are being maintained in congested conditions under poor to very poor hygienic condition with very little husbandry or veterinary support. The present paper narrates a success story, resulting in a significant decline in the bearbaiting in Pakistan. The problem has been tackled by direct administrative confiscation of the bears, resulting in a direct decline of this cruel practice about 89% decline is calculated in last three years and also provides rescue for the bear. The service of the government officials and general public was acknowledged through reward/awards in well advertised ceremonies. The administrative check was supported through mass awareness campaigns. The lectures and film shows organized in several thousands schools and several national and international events in the country to influence the young leadership and mass media regularly used for public awareness. A religious based awareness is underway for the religious scholars who have good influence among the peoples relevant to this practice. The confiscated bears are maintained in artificially designed wild conditions in Pakistan's Bear Sanctuary where the health of the bears ensured through constant monitoring of the health, activities and behaviors of the individual bears. Their daily activity patterns site preferences and preferred and offered diets also disused.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- Fakhar -i - Abbas is 32 years old and a PhD in Zoology (wildlife) from the University of the Punjab. He started working for bear protection in 1997. To date he has worked on various wildlife issues like ungulates, freshwater turtles, crocodiles, carnivores and the birds of Pakistan.
- Bear work during last 10 years
- Habitat surveys
- Monitoring on bear cubs poaching in the habitat
- Several hundred undercover bearbaiting events were monitored and after convincing authorities most of them were stopped and some confiscations were made
- Managing Bear sanctuary since last seven years
- Reared 5 bear cubs of average age of 3 months successfully.
- Delivered a lecture in two thousands schools addressing several hundred thousands students in both the bear habitat areas and bearbaiting affected areas.
- He has several research papers published and has written one book titled "Animal's Rights in Islam" while 2 further books on *Naemorhedus goral* and Birds of Pakistan are near completion. Representing the Pakistan Bear Sanctuary.
- Computer connected Multimedia projector required for the presentation

For details of projects and publications

Mailing Address: House 34 Bazar Road, Sector G-6/4 Islamabad Post box 1555 GPO, Islamabad Pakistan

Phone: +92(0)3009552253

Email: fakharabbas@hotmail.com
