

Newsletter of Compassionate Crusaders Trust



ANIMAL CRUSADERS

Annual Issue 2017

Stop telling the world how big the STORM is



Instead tell the storm how big your WORLD is



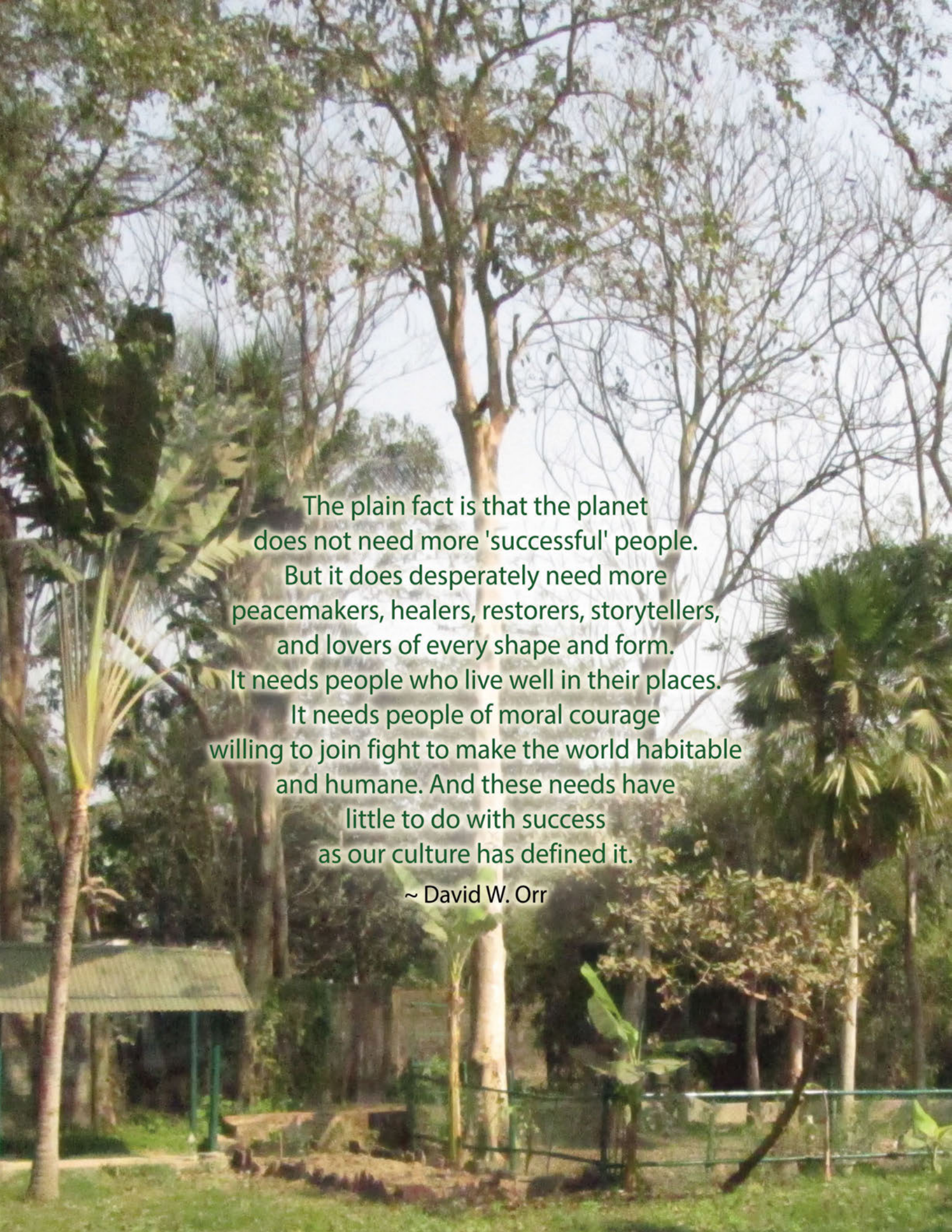
**Gratitude is the fairest blossom
which springs from the soul**

Mrs. Archana (Ruchi) Kohli
of Baltimore, MD 21230, U.S.A.
for round the year support of
the sheltered animals at Karuna Kunj

Late Dady Cursetji Dady
of Pune, Maharashtra, India
for round the year support of CCT's
Pony care & Mobile clinic

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The plain fact is that the planet
does not need more 'successful' people.
But it does desperately need more
peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers,
and lovers of every shape and form.
It needs people who live well in their places.
It needs people of moral courage
willing to join fight to make the world habitable
and humane. And these needs have
little to do with success
as our culture has defined it.

~ David W. Orr



Karuna Kunj story

In pursuit of a decent farewell

They are loyal and stay like family all through their lives, it is befitting that they are sent off like a family. But are there any proper burial grounds for pets?

The Tribune • 18th December, 2018 • Jasmine Singh

Chandigarh-based Amarpreet Sandhu, a graphic designer from Sector-41, wanted to give a decent burial to his Golden Retriever Sunny, who died in a car accident. Since he didn't want to bury Sunny in any vacant plot, he Googled, 'animal crematoriums Chandigarh' on his phone. He found that there are more than dozen pet clinics but not a single



proper burial ground or crematorium. Amarpreet had to eventually bury his pet in an empty plot of land in his neighbourhood.

Shortage of space

With no designated burial grounds or cremation services, most people either abandon their dead pets or bury them in the backyard of their house and plant a tree in their name! On the other

hand, if we take into account the growth of pet owners, globally almost 57 per cent of consumers own pets. In Chandigarh alone, there are 7,000 registered pets. Disposing off the pets has thus become a cause of concern and also a challenge for pet owners in the cities.

"You'll find a pet in every second house these days; these pets are considered a part of the family.



And when this family member dies, they either dump its body somewhere or bury it in the first vacant plot they come across," shares Hemant Kumar Uppal, Technical Officer-Reprography, The National Institute Of Health And Family Welfare, Munirka, New Delhi. Hemant, who is also a volunteer with NGO Kaberi, has rescued many birds and animals and when they die, he buries them near a ground located next to his house. "I put salt on the





Karuna Kunj story



body, and after the burial I light an incense stick and place a cement slab on top as a mark of respect."

Since the city's open spaces are shrinking, pet owners in the Tricity and around are left with limited options to bury their pets. The solution thus lies in providing designated burial grounds for pet animals. According to an MC official in Chandigarh, "The proposal to create a burial ground for animals is in the pipeline."

Off final goodbye

In a country where pet dogs and cats enjoy privileges of a spa and saloon, where pets sometimes share the same flight as their owners, asking for a decent burial space is not much. Sonu, president, Pet Lovers Association, Sector-20 Chandigarh, has raised the issue of a separate burial space for pets with MC department but nothing has come through yet. "Because of the lack of open spaces, it is a

better idea to cremate the pets instead of burying them. Also, asking for burial land means asking for office politics, which is not what we want, we already have enough departmental politics."

Shortage of land is definitely an issue with the city-dwellers, but at the same time the answer lies in environment friendly burial and Jeevashram Animal Shelter in Rajokri, also called the Garden Of Eternal Peace is one such place that has got its name in the Limca Book Of Records for the same reason. Jeevashram offers proper facilities for burial of pets in a tranquil open space. Dr Sunil Kumar, a doctor at Jeevasharam, feels it is the duty of the pet owners to give their pets a decent burial. "They stay with us like a family member for 7-8 years, and their death should also be treated like the death of a family member."

Though the government has set incinerators at some places in various cities, these do not function well. On the other hand, animal rights activists do not see this as an answer to problem of pet burials. They want proper cemeteries like the normal ones. Karuna Kunj, a burial ground run by The Compassionate Crusaders

Trust situated in South 24-Parganas, is one such cemetery that has adopted a good way to say goodbye to the creatures. Here grieving families offer prayers and flowers at the grave of the departed pets. Debasis Chakrabarti, founder and patron of Karuna Kunj, who started the first burial site for pets named Dog's Own as a pilot project in 1991, has always believed that dignity and love go hand-in-hand. "A pet takes care of the house for 12-13 years, and we leave it when it grows old. So, when I started the old age home for pets, I wanted to tell the owners that they should not abandon their pets."

Till date Karuna Kunj has done more than 6,000 burials. "We do not allow any pet to be buried in the same place as another within 6 months of the previous animal's burial. Normally, the soil is recycled every 4-6 months. Once a year, the leftovers of pets are taken out and fresh soil is put for hygiene purposes."



Sometimes the heart sees what is invisible to the eye. ~ H. Jackson Brown, Jr.



CCT's humane effort is honoured

Care, not death, for ex-service dogs - Army old-age home and adoption avenue

The Telegraph • September 11, 2017 • Imran Ahmed Siddiqui



Belgian Malinois



German Shepherd



Labrador

Belgian Malinois

Assault-cum-sniffer dogs that hunt down people in hiding. Their sense of smell is 40 times stronger than humans'. They can walk 30km without a break unlike German Shepherds or Labradors, and can work in adverse weather and high altitudes.

German Shepherds & Labradors

Excellent for patrolling and explosives detection but lack the Belgian Malinois's ability to acclimatise to hot and humid conditions. They can sniff out arms, explosives and narcotics and follow suspects' body odour trail.

New Delhi, Sept. 10: Gypsy, Gunner, Tank and Pluto can look forward to comfortable living, once they retire in a few months, at an old-age home for army dogs the government opened recently.

A little over a year ago, they would have been shot or administered euthanasia, which used to be the fate of all army and paramilitary dogs following retirement or incapacitation through injury or illness, unless they had won gallantry awards.

"From now on, all service dogs will continue to receive the love and care they deserve even after retirement," a senior army officer said. "We also plan to auction some of them off, or allow them to be adopted by their handlers, who have an emotional attachment to them and will not mind the expenses."

He added: "Not all military dogs can be auctioned, though. For instance, the assault dogs that help with counter-insurgency

operations cannot be placed in homes with children."

Sources said the old-age home was set up a few months ago at the war dog training school in Meerut after Delhi High Court, hearing a plea from NGOs, last year directed the defence ministry to formulate a policy to rehabilitate retired dogs.

Between the court order and the establishment of the Meerut home, all retired dogs were given away to their handlers - as is being done also by the paramilitary forces, which have yet to set up old-age homes for their dogs.

Army dogs usually retire at the age of seven or eight, which is about half their life span of 13-15. Apart from participating in assault, their tasks range from "routine patrol and protection to explosives detection and search and rescue", an officer said.

The army has over 1,000 trained dogs, mostly Labradors, German Shepherds and the Belgian Malinois - breeds that have a natural ability to adapt to training schedules and perform the tasks required of them.

An officer said: "Which breed is used for which tasks depends on the altitude and the weather."

He said that service dogs would now be killed only "when advised as the last recourse" because of medical or behavioural conditions.



CCT's humane effort is honoured

In America and Britain, military dogs are either put up at old-age homes or adopted, mostly by their handlers or other serving or retired military officers.

So far, the only force to auction retired service dogs in India has been the National Security Guard, an elite counter-terror wing.

"We auctioned them through a proper advertisement process," NSG spokesperson Rakesh Kumar said.

Dogs that have won gallantry awards, bestowed for "individual acts of exceptional devotion to duty or courage", have always been looked after well following retirement, though.

Rocky, a Belgian Malinois that had helped the Pathankot anti-terror operation in January 2016, was recommended for the Sena Medal last year.

Award-winning dogs are paid between Rs 15,000 and Rs 20,000 a month, which is spent on their

food and medical expenses. The decorated dogs continue to receive their salaries after retirement.

The army's dogs from the Remount and Veterinary Corps Centre and School, Meerut, and their trainers have won one Shaurya Chakra, six Sena Medals and nearly 600 commendation cards from the chief, vice-chief and commanders. The dogs are integral to counter-terror operations in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast.



Let us remember that animals are not mere resources for human consumption. They are splendid beings in their own right, who have evolved alongside us as co-inheritors of all the beauty and abundance of life on this planet ~ Marc Bekoff



Strays are community pets

IIT student fights for stray dog on campus

The Telegraph • February 19 2018 • Piyush Srivastava

Lucknow: A student of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, has filed a police complaint against some security guards for mistreating a stray well past its prime and not allowing the dog to stay on the campus.

In his complaint Prateek Jain, who is in his third year BTech, said Haski, "an old dog" loved by students, had been living on the campus for the past 10 years.

"He never bothered anybody and there was no reason to take him away. Still, four security guards came, trapped the dog in a net and dragged him to a van," Prateek wrote in his complaint to Kalyanpur police station on Saturday.



Prateek said he wanted strict action against the guilty persons and Haski back near his hostel, No. 4B, the dog's usual place.

Sameer Singh, in-charge of Kalyanpur police station, said: "We have registered an FIR against unidentified security guards under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and trying to identify them. We are also trying to find and bring back Haski. The stray pet can live there because a student wants it back and none is opposing his request."

Prateek said his seniors had given Haski the name and would give food to the dog, which became popular because of its "non-aggressive attitude".



The police have booked the unknown security guards under Section 11 of the Act. If found and proved guilty they could be fined up to Rs 50 and up to Rs 100 if they committed a similar crime within three years.

Anurag Arya, superintendent of police, Kanpur city east, said: "We are probing the case on the basis of CCTV footage... the guilty must be identified soon."

Police sources in Lucknow said a security agency hired by the IIT had been given standing instructions to clear the campus of stray animals at regular intervals.

"But we will take action against the guards because a student was emotionally hurt to see the incident. The guards could have discussed the matter with the residents before taking the dog away. They should have taken the dog away without hurting it after taking the students into confidence," said an officer.



You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; in just the same way, you learn to love by loving. ~ Anatole France



Forest funds not for zoos and cars

The Telegraph • February 19, 2018
G.S. Mudur

New Delhi: The Centre has notified draft rules for how states may spend their share of an accumulated Rs 50,000 crore of "compensatory afforestation" funds exclusively earmarked for growth and regeneration of forests, specifying allowed and disallowed activities.

The rules relate to the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016, a legislation to facilitate expeditious use of funds collected as compensation for forest land diverted for industrial or infrastructure activities and intended to replenish such lost forest land.

The draft rules, notified by the Union environment and forests ministry on Friday, specify that 80 per cent of the compensatory afforestation funds distributed to states should be used on one of 12 activities, including natural regeneration of forests, artificial regeneration, or plantations, the protection of plantations and forests, among others.

These funds may also be used for pest and disease control, tree cultivation, prevention and control of forest fires, soil and moisture conservation, the improvement of wildlife habitats, the relocation of villages from protected areas, establishment and maintenance of animal rescue centres and veterinary treatment

facilities for wild animals, rejuvenating forests in wildlife corridors, and supply of wood and other forest-saving devices.

The rules disallow the use of the afforestation funds for certain activities, including for payment of salaries or travelling expenses of regular employees of state forest departments, purchase of vehicles or staff cars for officers or heavy vehicles, construction of residential or official buildings for officers above forest range officers of state forest departments, or expansion or upgradation of zoo and wildlife safari activities.

Environment ministry officials have said the list of disallowed activities is intended to ensure the compensatory afforestation fund is used exclusively into growing and regenerating forests.

The environment ministry has said it is open to receiving suggestions or objections to the draft rules for 30 days.

The notification comes days after Congress leader and former

environment minister Jairam Ramesh had questioned the Centre's delay in releasing the draft rules and had expressed concern that it posed a threat to the rights and livelihoods of tribals and forest dwellers.

The draft rules appear to address these concerns. The rules specify that activities over forest land "shall be taken up in consultation with the Gram Sabha, or Van Sanrakshan Samiti, or Village Forest Committee and shall be in consonance with the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006."

The Centre has said the activities under the compensatory afforestation fund are intended to mitigate the impact of diversion of forest land, and the funds are expected to help generate employment opportunities in rural areas, including tribal areas.





“ওদের বাঁচান”

শব্দবাজির তীব্রতা থেকে পশু-পাখি রক্ষায় সরব নানা মহল

[কলকাতা, ১৮ই অক্টোবর • হিন্দুস্থান সমাচার
অশোক সেনগুপ্ত]

প্রতি কালীপুজোয় বিভিন্ন ভাবে বেশ কিছু পাখি নিশ্চিহ্ন হয়ে যায়। আলো আর শব্দের তীব্রতা ওরা সহ্য করতে পারে না। কালীপুজোয় শব্দবাজির তীব্রতা থেকে পশু-পাখিদের বাঁচাতে নানাভাবে সচেতনতা তৈরিতে উদ্যোগী হয়েছে ‘কমপেশনেট ক্রুসেডার্স ট্রাস্ট’। প্রচার চালাচ্ছে “ওদের বাঁচান!” এদের প্রচার এবং সংবাদপত্রে লেখালেখির জেরে নড়েচড়ে বসেছে পুলিশ। কলকাতা পুলিশ তাদের ওয়েবসাইটে লিখেছে, “দায়িত্ব সহকারে উদ্যাপন করুন, এটা আমাদেরও দীপাবলি!” পাশে কম্বল জাতীয় জিনিস দিয়ে মাথা ঢাকা একটি পোষ্য কুকুরের ছবি। বিধাননগর পুলিশও প্রচারপত্র বিলি করেছে। তাতে ছোট্ট কুকুরের ছবি দিয়ে ওদের কথা ভাবার আবেদন।

‘কমপেশনেট ক্রুসেডার্স ট্রাস্ট’-এর ট্রাস্টি দেবাশিষ চক্রবর্তী জানান, “আমরা অনেক কালীপুজোয় মূলত কুকুরের মত পোষ্যের নিরাপত্তার দিকটাই বেশি করে দেখি। কিন্তু, আরো বেশি সঙ্কটে পড়ে পাখিরা। কেবল শব্দবাজি নয়, আলো প্রতিযোগিতায় অনেক জায়গায় গাছকে

শিখড়ি হিসাবে খাড়া করা হয়। এক বারও কেউ ভেবে দেখেন না, গাছের নানা স্তরে নানা রকম পাখির বাস। পুজোর উদ্যোক্তারা কেউ বিবেচনা করেন না পুজোর আনন্দের খেসারত কীভাবে দিতে হয় পাখিদের। বহু পাখি নিশ্চিহ্ন হয়ে যায় এ সবেের জেরে।

দেবাশিষবাবু জানান, “লাগামছাড়া শব্দবাজিতে সঙ্কটে পড়ে কাঠবিড়ালিরাও। নভেম্বর মাস নাগাদ ওরা গাছের কোটরে সন্তান প্রসব করে। এই সময়টা ওদের খুব নিরিবিলি পরিবেশ দরকার।” ‘কমপেশনেট ক্রুসেডার্স ট্রাস্ট’-এর সহযোগিতায় বিধাননগর থানা লিখিত প্রচারপত্র বিলি করেছে। তাতে ছোট্ট কুকুরের ছবি দিয়ে আবেদন, “বিকট শব্দবাজি ফাটালে এরা ভীতসন্ত্রস্ত হয়ে পড়ে। মনে রাখবেন এদের শ্রবণ ক্ষমতা আমাদের চেয়ে ৪ থেকে ৫ গুণ বেশি। এদের রক্ষা করুন এবং সগর্বে শব্দবাজিকে ‘না’ বলুন।”

এই প্রথম নয়, দুর্গাপুজোর সময়েও প্রচারে নেমেছিল ‘কমপেশনেট ক্রুসেডার্স ট্রাস্ট’। মা দুর্গা এবং তাঁর সন্তানসন্ততিদের বাহনের ছবি দিয়ে নিচে লেখা ছিল একটা নিরীহ প্রশ্ন, “আমরাই তো মাকে নিয়ে আসি! তবু কেন আমাদের এই অবহেলা?”

ওরা অবলা। তবে, পরিবারের যে কোনও সদস্যের মতই ঘনিষ্ঠ। গত বছর দীপাবলীর রাতে খাটের নিচে লুকিয়ে ছিল ডিক। একবার খাবারের বাটিটা দেখে

গুটিগুটি চারপায়ে এগিয়ে আসতেই বাইরে শুরু হয় চকলেট বোমার দাপট। ভয়াব্র কুকুরছানাটি মুখের খাবার ফেলে ফের আশ্রয় নিয়েছিল খাটের তলায়। বাড়িশুদ্ধ লোক অনেক ডাকাডাকি করেও সারা রাত তাকে আর বার করতে পারেননি।

এবার অবশ্য ডিকদের জন্য সুসংবাদ। শুধু মানুষজন নয়, কালীপুজোর রাতে শব্দবাজির দাপটে পশুপাখিদের যাতে অসুবিধা না হয়, সেজন্য আবেদন জানাল পুলিশ। কলকাতা পুলিশ সূত্রের দাবি, এ বার সাধারণ মানুষের পাশাপাশি বাড়ির পোষ্যও যদি শব্দবাজির আওয়াজে অসুবিধা বোধ করে তাহলেও পুলিশ ব্যবস্থা নেবে। গত ক’বছর ধরে শব্দবাজির দাপটে অসুস্থ বা অসুবিধা হওয়ার ভুরিভুরি অভিযোগ জমা পড়েছে পুলিশের কাছে। কিন্তু পোষ্যদের অসুবিধা হলে অসহায় অপেক্ষা ছাড়া কিছু করার থাকে না পোষ্যের মালিকের। গত ক’বছর ধরেই কিছু পশুপ্রেমী সংগঠন এ বিষয়ে ব্যবস্থা নেওয়ার আবেদন জানিয়ে আসছিল।

পুলিশ অবশ্য জানিয়েছে, এ বছরেও বহুতলগুলির দিকে বাড়তি নজর রাখবে। মঙ্গলবার এক স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থার সহায়তায় গড়িয়াহাট থানা শিশুদের নিয়ে সচেতনতার প্রচারে মিছিল বের করে। নিউ আলিপুরে, শেক্সপীয়ার সরণি-সহ একাধিক থানার পুলিশও এদিন বিভিন্ন আবাসনে গিয়ে শব্দবাজি না ফাটানোর আবেদন জানায়।

একটা সুন্দর মন অন্ধকারে আলোর মতো, যার মাধ্যমে কলুষতার মাঝেও
নিজের অস্তিত্বকে মর্যাদাসম্পন্ন রাখা যায় ~ দানিয়েল



আমাকে মারো কিন্তু পাখিগুলোকে ছেড়ে দাও

গলার কাছে তাক করা ছুরির সামনে দাঁড়িয়ে এই কথাই বলেছিলেন নন্দকিশোর ভুজবল। দু'জনেই আজ চিন্তা হ্রদের পাখিদের ত্রাতা।

[১৪ই জানুয়ারি, ২০১৮ • আনন্দবাজার পত্রিকা, রবিবাসরীয়, উর্মি নাথ]

চিন্তা হ্রদের ধারে দাঁড়িয়ে, উড়ন্ত বকের দিকে তাক করে এয়ারগানের ট্রিগার চেপে ধরল কিশোর ছেলোট। গুড্রুম! নির্ভুল টিপ। বন্দুক দিয়ে পাখি মেরে, সেই মৃত পাখির পায়ে দড়ি বেঁধে দোলাতে দোলাতে নিয়ে যাওয়া — এই ছিল ছেলোটের খেলা। সে দিনও তাই হত, কিন্তু মৃত বকের দু'ঠোঁটের মধ্যে তখনও আটকে আছে খড়কুটো। বাসা বানানোর জন্য নিয়ে যাচ্ছিল নিশ্চয়ই। দৃশ্যটা দেখে অনুতাপ হল, কান্না পেল কিশোর নন্দকিশোর ভুজবলের।

সত্তরের দশকের প্রথম দিক, নন্দকিশোর তাঁর গ্রাম টাঙ্গি থেকে চলে আসেন শহরে। সেই এয়ারগানটা কবেই হারিয়ে গিয়েছে তাঁর, বরং ভাল লাগে পাখির রঙিন ডানা। দেশি-বিদেশি পাখি নিয়ে চর্চাও করেন। চিন্তা হ্রদের একটা অংশের নাম মঙ্গলাজোড়ি। সেখানে অবশ্য চিন্তার মতো অত জল নেই। কম জলে মাছ বেশি। জেলেদের যেমন প্রিয় জায়গা তেমন শীত পড়তে না পড়তেই মঙ্গলাজোড়ির জলাশয় ভরে যায় লক্ষ লক্ষ পরিযায়ী পাখির কলতানে। নব্বইয়ের দশকের প্রথম দিকে নন্দকিশোর বুঝেছিলেন, এই হ্রদের পাখিরা বিপন্ন। শীতের সময় মাছ ধরার পাশাপাশি জেলেরা কখনও বিষ দিয়ে, কখনও গুলি করে, কখনও স্রেফ ঘাড় মটকে নির্বিচারে হত্যা করে ইউরোপ, রাশিয়া, বৈকাল হ্রদ, কাস্পিয়ান সাগর, মানস সরোবর থেকে উড়ে আসা হাঁসদের। একটা হাঁস মারতে পারলে দারুণ ভোজ। জেলেদের খিদের

চেয়ে স্থানীয় ধাবা মালিকদের খিদে আরও বেশি। একটা হাঁস মানে ৪০-৫০ টাকা।

“এই ঘটনা জানার পর ছোটবেলার সেই অনুতাপ আবার জীবন্ত হয়ে উঠেছিল। কিছু একটা করা দরকার। এই চিন্তা বারবার তাড়া করছিল। শিকারীদের সবাই ভয় পেত। যাকে মঙ্গলাজোড়ির ‘বীরপ্লন’ বলা হত সেই কিশোর বেহেরার সঙ্গেই প্রথম কথা বলেছিলাম।” স্মৃতিচারণের মধ্য দিয়ে অনেকগুলো বছর পিছিয়ে গেলেন নন্দকিশোর। কিশোর ছাড়াও সেই সময় আরও এক ত্রাসের নাম মধু বেহেরা। মধু ও তাঁর দলের ১১ জন সঙ্গী শিকারীকে সবাই বলত ‘ডার্টি ডজন’। তাঁদের বিরুদ্ধে আঙুল তোলার সাহস ছিল না বনদফতরেও! নন্দকিশোর বুঝেছিলেন, কাজটা সহজ নয়। ‘বীরপ্লন’ ও ‘ডার্টি ডজন’ দের বোঝাতে গিয়ে পেলেন প্রাণনাশের হুমকি! কিন্তু জেদ ছাড়লেন না। পাখি শিকারের বিরুদ্ধে সেই জোগাড় শুরু করলেন তিনি। অস্বস্তি বাড়ল শিকারীদের মধ্যে।

শোনা যায়, নীরব প্রতিবাদ এমন জায়গায় পৌঁছেছিল যে মধু নাকি ছুরি হাতে আপনার বাড়ি সটান চলে এসেছিল, আপনাকে খুন করতে? প্রশ্ন শুনে হেসে ফেললেন নন্দকিশোর, “হ্যাঁ সে সব হয়েছিল বটে। কিন্তু এখন তো সব বদলে গিয়েছে।” সেদিন মধুর ছুরির সামনে ভয় না পেয়ে তিনি বলেছিলেন, “আমাকে মেরে ফেলো কিন্তু পাখিগুলোকে ছেড়ে দাও।” কথাটায় ধাক্কা খেয়েছিলেন মধু। ক’দিন পর সদলবলে নন্দকিশোরের কাছে এসে জানিয়েছিলেন, তাঁরা আর পাখি হত্যা করবেন না। কিন্তু নন্দকিশোর বুঝেছিলেন, অভাবের তাড়নায় জেলেরা শিকার করে। আবেগ কাটলেই খিদে আবার তাদের ধাবামুখী করবে। তা হলে? একটাই রাস্তা। মানুষগুলো ধর্মভীরু।

নন্দকিশোর তাঁদের নিয়ে গেলেন গ্রামের মন্দিরে। ঈশ্বর স্বাক্ষরী রেখে তাঁরা শপথ নিলেন, আর কোনওদিন পাখি হত্যা করবেন না। নন্দকিশোর বুঝেছিলেন, শিকার পুরোপুরি বন্ধ হবে তখনই, যদি এদের বিকল্প রোজগারের ব্যবস্থা করা যায়। শুরু হল সেই কাজ। তাঁর উদ্যোগে তৈরি হল ‘শ্রী শ্রী মহাবীর পক্ষী সুরক্ষা সমিতি’। কিশোর, মধু ও বাকি চোরা শিকারীদের নিয়ে শুরু করলেন পাখি চেনানোর কাজ।

বেশ কয়েক বছর হল মঙ্গলাজোড়িতে মধু ও তাঁর দলের লোকেরা পর্যটকদের নৌকায় করে ঘুরিয়ে দেখায় লক্ষ লক্ষ পরিযায়ী পাখি। পাখি দেখাতে দেখাতে ওঁরা বলে ওঠেন, ‘ও দেখিয়ে পিনটেল, থোড়া বাদ গুডনাইট-কা বুন্ড পুরা আসমান ভর দেগা। লেপ্স রেডি করকে রাখিয়ে মালাড-কা ফ্লাইং শট মিল জায়েগা।’ কে বলবে এঁরা কখনও রত্নাকর ছিলেন। এ যেন পূর্বজন্মের কথা! এঁদের প্রায় সকলের হাতে সেলিম আলির ‘দ্য বুক অব ইন্ডিয়ান বার্ডস’। কিন্তু কেউ ইংরেজি পড়তে জানেন না! অনেকে নিরক্ষরও। তবু জানেন পাখিদের ইংরেজি নাম। কোনও পর্যটক বুঝতে না পারলে বই খুলে দেখিয়ে দেন পাখিটির ছবি। শুধু পাখি চেনানো নয়, এঁরা রাত জেগে পাহারা দেন শিকার আটকানোর জন্য। প্লাস্টিকমুক্ত রাখার চেষ্টা করেন হ্রদ। আর্থিক অবস্থাও এখন অনেকটাই ভাল। চিন্তা উন্নয়ন নিগম ‘শ্রী শ্রী মহাবীর পক্ষী সুরক্ষা সমিতি’ কে স্বীকৃতি দেওয়ার পর এই কাজে এগিয়ে এসেছেন আরও অনেক জেলে। এখন মঙ্গলাজোড়ি পাখিদের স্বর্গরাজ্য।

“পুরনো দিনের কথা আর মনে রাখতে চাই না। আমরা যা করেছিলাম, ঠিক করিনি। কিন্তু এখন বদলে গিয়েছি। এখানে ইকোটুরিজম তৈরি হয়েছে। প্রচুর পর্যটক আসেন। আমরাই সবাইকে ঘুরে দেখাই।” মধু বেহেরার গলায় পরম তৃপ্তি।





Sulabh International : Humane effort in Sunderbans

Tiger widows of some Sunderbans villages will be adopted by Sulabh International

TNN • Jan 20, 2018 • Kamalendu Bhadra

KOLKATA: Tiger widows of some Sunderbans villages will be adopted by Sulabh International, an organization that supports more than a thousand widows in Vrindavan and Benaras. They will be given vocational training and provided assistance for self-employment. The purpose, according to Sulabh which is now conducting a survey across three Sunderbans villages to identify the beneficiaries, is to help them lead a life of dignity. Women who have lost their husbands in tiger attacks are referred 'tiger widows'.



The edge of the forest are inhabited by tiger widows. Birinchibari and Hiranmoypur of Jharkhali, Satjelia, Kumirmari and Nafarganj are a few among them. Sulabh Foundation has been taking care of around 1000 widows residing in five widow ashrams of Vrindavan, and a couple of ashrams in Varanasi. Women widowed in the Kedarnath water disaster of 2013 are being given vocational training and monetary assistance.

On Friday, around 70 widows from Nabadwip, Vrindavan,

Varanasi, Uttarhand and Sunderbans attended a seminar on 'Emancipation and Empowerment of Widows' organised by the newly-formed Raja Rammohan Roy and Pandit Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar Foundation in Kolkata.

Subarna Sarkar, 65, a tiger widow from Hiranmoypur village in Jharkhali was among them. She lost her husband Jogesh 15 years ago. Jogesh was killed by a tiger while he went inside the forest to catch crabs. The childless woman lives with her nephew and has been struggling to survive.

"We are doing field work in villages of Sunderbans to identify tiger widows. They will be provided some kind of self-employment and a life of dignity," said Bindeshwa.



The best thing to hold onto in life is each other. ~ Audrey Hepburn



City pet owners irked by rising medical bills

For a simple case of stress or fever, clinics are suggesting owners to opt for treatment packages priced between ₹1,000 and ₹6,000

The Times of India (Kolkata) • Apr 03 2017
• Amita Ghose

When Shongeeta Sanyal found a starving kitten near her home and took the barely three-day-old stray to an animal clinic near Rashbehari, she was not prepared for what came next. After administering medicines and saline and recommending a repeat visit, the clinic handed her the bill - around ₹1,200. Shongeeta, who does a lot of pet rescuing, told us that in cases requiring urgent medical attention, it's not always possible to take a stray to a government hospital. "If a pet lover is charged ₹3,000 ₹4,000 every time they take a stray to a nearby clinic, how do you expect them to continue doing it? It's not possible to keep spending that kind of money. Even the employees manning these clinics keep coercing you into spending more. I was once blackmailed by a clinic's employees, who said, 'If you don't buy these medicines, the cat will die,'" she added.

But Shongeeta is not the only one who has had to taste this bitter pill. We met several pet owners and animal lovers, who had the same complaint against private clinics. From prescribing needless medicines to repeated post-treatment visits, these clinics are charging pet owners hefty amounts.

CT spoke to a few other pet owners as well as vetsexperts to get to the bottom of this trend. Here's what we found out...

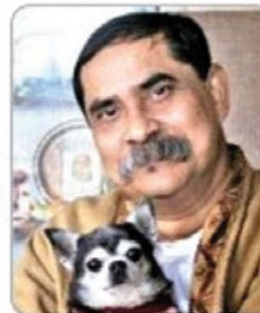
According to the owners, the cost is increasing with each passing day. Now, for a simple case of stress or fever, clinics are suggesting owners to opt for treatment packages priced between ₹1,000 and ₹6,000! On the other hand, Meghali Roy Bhanja, a pet owner, told us that she's had two very bad experiences at an NGO and got help from a private clinic. "On both occasions, my cats were neglected by the on-duty doctors.

While the first cat died, the latter got even sicker after coming back from the NGO. That's when a private clinic came to my rescue and saved the cat, and I'm really grateful to the doctor for that."

Pet owners are a harassed lot

This trend of superexpensive pet treatment started about four-five years ago. I agree there's a class of people who can afford weekly spas and expensive food and treatments for their pets, but that doesn't mean everyone can. Most clinics in posh areas of the city charge a premium for the most basic treatments. Such is the situation that pets and their owners have similar medical expenses. No treatment is available for less than ₹1,500 told Naren Sahani, dog-owner and a resident of Southern Avenue [Excerpt]

We keep receiving complaints about expensive private clinics from local pet rescuers. At our NGO, we give the same treatment for half the price. Of course, many clinics still charge reasonably, so we can't blame all. Moreover, if a clinic is providing a lot of facilities, it will charge high



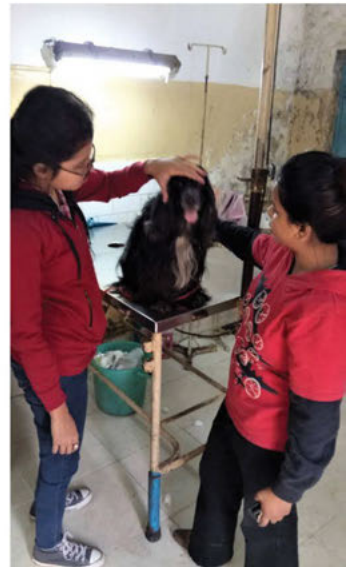
Debasis Chakrabarti, from the NGO, Compassionate Crusaders

“I have five cats at home and also take care of stray cats in my locality. It's very important to get these strays sterilised. And the sterilisation that once used to cost around ₹1,500, including post-operative care, now costs nothing less than ₹6,000 in private clinics. These clinics have set treatment packages that can cost anything between ₹3,000 and ₹10,000!

— Kamalika Chowdhury, cat lover and a resident of BK Paul Avenue



Clinic Care



You give loyalty, you'll get it back. You give love, you'll get it back. ~ Tommy Lasord



Pony Care





Mobile Clinic and Rescue





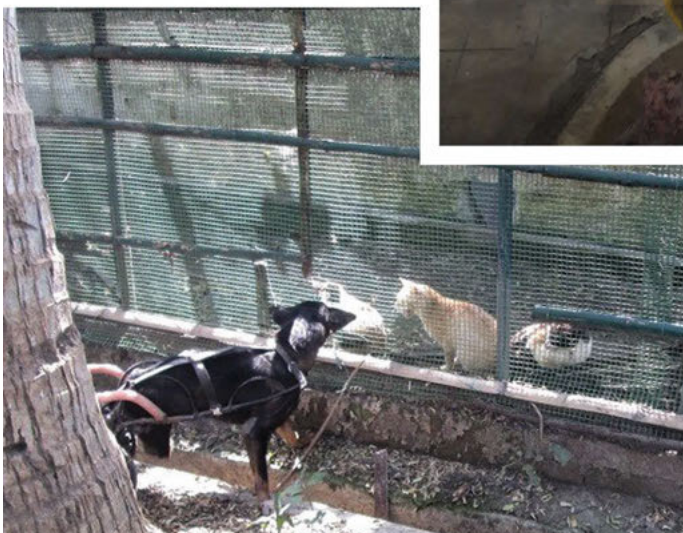
Animals are Family



Until one has loved an animal a part of one's soul remains unawakened. ~ Anatole France



Karuna Kunj Cattery





Chhoti at Karuna Kunj



Chhota Kalu at Karuna Kunj



COMPASSIONATE



An injured dog being treated in the office of NGO Compassionate Crusaders Trust. (Sanjoy Chattopadhyaya)

[Photo: The Telegraph, India]





The People of Sikkim Can Now Adopt a New Sibling — a Tree!

This follows the age-old tradition of the relationship between man and nature, and any tree protected by this relationship cannot be felled or damaged, as per government rules.

The Better India • January 19, 2018 • Anakha Arikara

With its lush green forests, and rich flora and fauna, Sikkim is truly one of the most beautiful states in India. Much of this is credited to the policies of the Forests, Environment, and Wildlife Management Department.

According to The Hindu, a more recent addition to Sikkim’s nature conservation policies makes an effort to encourage citizens to preserve nature by forming lasting bonds with trees.



If you were to open the Sikkim Forest Tree (Amity and Reverence) Rules for 2017, you would come across a section which states the following:

“The State Government shall allow any person to associate with trees standing on his or her private land or on any public land:

(i) by entering into a Mith/Mit or Mitini relationship with a tree in which case the tree shall be called a Mith/Mit tree;

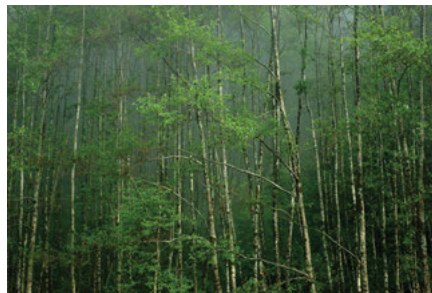
(ii) by adopting a tree as if it was his or her own child in which case the tree shall be called an adopted tree;

(iii) by preserving a tree in remembrance of a departed relative in which case the tree shall be called a Smriti tree”

So, what is “Mith”?

Also called Mitini, this refers to the practice of forging a relationship with the tree in which the man or woman regards the tree as his or her brother.

This follows the age-old tradition of the relationship between man and nature, and any tree protected by this relationship cannot be felled or damaged, as per government rules.



The process is simple.

1. Pick a tree

This tree can be both on your personal property, or in a public area. If you would like to adopt a tree on someone else’s property, Sikkim’s rules require that the owner be compensated the full amount of the market value of the timber to be obtained from the tree, and both parties must enter into the agreement.

2. Fill out the required forms

Depending on the type of relationship you would like to forge, the government has a special form. This is available on the government website and requires you to detail the reasons why you wish to adopt a tree.

3. Assessment by the Assistant Conservator of Forests

The Assistant Conservator of Forests will investigate whether or not the tree is available for adoption, to form a Mit/Mith or Mitini relationship. Once the tree is approved, the Assistant Conservator will provide you with a date, in which you can perform any ritual you see fit and make an entry in the official register.

After this process is completed, the department issues a certificate with the coordinates of the tree and just like that; you can now be family to a tree!

FORM - 4
(Rev. 04/15)

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
FOREST, ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Certificate

This is to certify the _____ (name of the person) has entered into the solemn bond of Mith/Mit/Mitini with or adopted the _____ tree of _____ girth located on plot no. _____ with GPS coordinates _____ E, _____ W on this _____ day of _____ month of _____ year.

The Department of Forest, Environment & Wildlife Management, Government of Sikkim acknowledges his/her efforts towards nature conservation.

PCCF-cum-Dt. Secretary
Forest, Env. & Wildlife Management Department

Speaking to The Hindu, Thomas Chandy, Principal Secretary and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests said, “We will take up the issue in a major way at the upcoming Paryavaran Mahotsav being organised by the Sikkim government.”



Eco-Logical

The threatened countryside: the agrochemical extremism

During one of my village trips, I was among a group of villagers, talking with them. I was unhappy to find the children mostly unhealthy and asked the elders why it was so. 'Why will not that be', bang came the reply from an elderly man. 'All the paddy fields', he said, used to grow copious amount of tasty small fish, which

was the protein support for most of the villagers, particularly the small children. 'Because of the use of pesticides, there is no fish growing in our paddy fields any more. This was one of the best narratives I have come across in my life which carries with itself a phenomenal amount of scientific information and direction to act. Ask any aged villager, she will tell you that many bird species are lost, tree species are not being found or frogs are absent. Frogs used to consume 20% of the insects in the paddy fields. The

point, however, is that villagers know it and they apply the same pesticides as well. Understandably, they have been caught in a trap where they are perforce to use more and more chemical fertilisers and pesticides to break even. Although bio-fertilisers are available, farmers are not showing keenness to gradually switch over to a lower chemical fertiliser-pesticide regime. Unless the matter is addressed on a war footing, our countryside will be irreversibly lost to lifeless landscapes.

~ Dr. Dhruvajyoti Ghosh

For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for Nature cannot be fooled

Richard Feynman



- পুস্কর পাড় ইট বা সিমেন্ট নিজে ব্যয়িত কেণ্ডা পুস্কর ভাটোর মইই স্বচিকিব।
- পুরিলেপ রক্ষার পুস্করের সবতরে দমী জাচাখাটা হলে, যানের কোশে চাবে পাড়।
- এই নমম মটির পাড় বিতে বেঁচে থাকে বহু ছোট ছোট উপকরী: ধুইধু ও গাছ-পাছড়া। এর মধ্যে ব্যাঙও উল্লেখযোগ্য।
- ব্যাঙ সহ ঐসব জলজ প্রাণী বেঁচে থাকার সঙ্গে জড়িয়ে রয়েছে পরিবেশের ভারসাম্য।
- শহর ও গ্রামের প্রতিটি পুস্কর, বায়াজোবা সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে, না হলে পরিবেশে দুর্ভোগ থেকে রক্ষা পাওয়া যাবে না।
- পুস্করের পাড় কচুবে ও খোপকাড় উঠারী করতে হবে।
- পুস্করের জলে কেবল পাছাখোড়া দালাতে হবে।
- পুস্কর পাড় সবদমেই নমম রাখতে হবে।
- সেখানে কোনভাবেই সিমেন্ট বা টালি ছোঁয়ানো চলবে না।
- পুস্করের কোশে ব্যাঙ, কঁকড়া, শামুক, জল কঁড়ি, জলতোড়া সাপ সহ বিভিন্ন উপকরী সোপানাকড় রাখতে হবে।
- এইসব কীট যেহেতু শিকারির মত সিমেন্টের দেওয়ালের উঠানো করতে পারে না, তাই পুস্কর পাড় সবদমেই নমম মটির চাল বতরা উচিত।
- এছাড়া পাড়ের সর্নিতেও ঐসব কীট যাতে থাকতে পারে সেটিকে নমম বিতে হবে।
- জলতোড়া সাপ ইত্যরের বৎসুধি নিয়ন্ত্রণ করে।
- পুস্করের পাড় বেড়া দেওয়ার বিশেষ প্রয়োজন হলে সেখানে বড় বড় খোপওয়াল তীর ও তারওয়ালি দেওয়া ভালো।
- কোথাও অত্যন্ত জরুরী কারণে পুস্করের পাড় সিমেন্ট নিজে বঁপানো হলে, সেখানে পুস্করের পাড় বেশ কিছুটা অংশ মাটি বেলা দান করতে হবে।
- হেঁচরী করতে হবে জলের মধ্যে আগাছার বোপকাড়।



STOP PRESS As a tribute to one of our Life Members and a Wetland Crusader, Dr. Dhrubojyoti Ghosh, the engineer-turned-ecologist who found, named and introduced the East Calcutta Wetlands to the world, died in Calcutta on February 16, 2018; we reprint 'his page' from our Commemorative Issue of December 2010.



The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference





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People are never respected merely for their riches, but rather for their philanthropy; we do not value the sun for its height, but for its use. ~ Gamaliel Bailey

We  *animals*
Aaron & his mother



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CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

- **Article 48-A of the Indian Constitution-The directive principles:**
The state should protect and improve the environment and safeguard the forests and wild life of the country. This directive was added by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976.
- **Article 51-A(g) of the Indian Constitution- The Fundamental Duties :**
"It shall be the fundamental duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the Natural Environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for all living creatures."