


SAZARC

FIRST SOUTH ASIAN ZOO MEETING HELD IN CENTRAL ZOO, KMTNC KATHMANDU, NEPAL -- ASSOCIATION FORMED

Although much of the international zoo world today is organised, South Asia remained out of the picture. India -- with its multiplicity of zoos, Central Zoo Authority and Indian Zoo Directors' Association -- was well known, but the countries surrounding it have not enjoyed the same degree of attention. It was not known, even, how many zoos some of these countries had.

An effort was made to unite these countries by publishing their news and sending periodical bulletins and booklets of use to them for the last several years. However, with the formation of CBSG South Asia it was decided to take the step of organising a meeting in connection with a CBSG, South Asia meeting. Due to various time and date constraints, only a day and a bit could be allocated for the zoo meeting, but on the evening of 3 August, in the Clarion Hotel in Kathmandu, Nepal 16 zoo officials from five countries and 11 zoos met and introduced themselves, their zoos along with their problems and potential to one another.

Many of these zoo officials lived in the same country but had not met before, so it was an incredibly touching and moving occasion. The atmosphere was weighted with excitement and happiness at finally coming together which no one was shy to express.



Zoo managers, veterinarians, curators and educators from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal

The following day, after hearing zoo reports from every country and zoo, a meeting of the zoo personnel was held to decide if communication, coordination, and cooperation between these countries was desirable and if so, how best to go about it. There was no dissenting opinion that a regional association to aid in communication, cooperation and coordination was very much wanted by all present. It was decided to form there and then create an ad hoc committee to work out details of registration and rules, etc. The names and contact information for these committee members follows elsewhere in this newsletter.

Later the organising committee met and deliberated a name and acronym for the association. After much deliberation SAZARC (sahz-ark) -- South Asian Zoo

likely) was gratefully accepted by the committee. Annual meetings will take place in connection with CBSG South Asia Annual Meeting (probably around August or September) and some good training course.

Zoo Outreach Organisation offered to serve as administrative office for the fledgling association for two years or so till its feathers fully fill out and will provide the organising committee members and the South Asia Zoos with all possible materials and contacts so it may develop links with other associations, institutions and individuals around the world.

This newsletter is a temporary device to fill the need of the hour -- to promote the new association and to serve as its communication medium for the time being. News and announcements are welcome from South Asia and other regional and national associations.

Association for Regional Cooperation -- was selected out of nine suggestions. The organising committee will research weighty questions of registration, by-laws, constitution, membership, etc., staying in touch with founder members and others by email.

The invitation of Sri Lanka to host the next meeting (official permission pending but



Participants finding a lot to smile about at the first get-together at Clarion Hotel.



Participants were asked to tell why they came to the meeting and what they hoped to achieve for their zoo and for their country.

Jayanthi Alahakoon, Sri Lanka

- to learn breeding techniques for endangered birds.
- share my knowledge on tranquilization of wild animals with other vets.
- learn possibilities of exchanging surplus animals
- gain knowledge on veterinary aspect and Friends of the Zoo

S. Gunasena, Sri Lanka

- to share my knowledge and experience on zoo management
- learn more about conservation breeding for reintroduction of endangered species
- visualise and learn more about zoo education programmes for our new zoo in Pinnewala and
- establish contacts personally to work towards a regional cooperation.

Mazhar Hussain, Islamabad

- to get more guidance in zoo management and planning
- learn how to develop a masterplan for present and future zoos.
- learn how to upgrade an existing small zoo
- learn how to develop a masterplan for a new large zoo
- explore possibilities of cooperation for exchange of animals and sharing of expertise with other zoos in the region.

Uzma Khan, Lahore Zoo

- to learn more from the education workshop for my zoo and launch the same for other zoos in Pakistan.
- meet people from other zoos and exchange ideas particularly about education

Arshad Toosy, Lahore Zoo

- to learn more from other regional zoos.
- share problems/difficulties
- establish a South Asian Zoo organisation for better planned breeding programmes.

Serazul Islam, Dakha Zoo

- to form an association of South Asian Zoos
 - improve animal exchange between countries and
 - get ideas about zoo conservation education programmes.
- What I feel is that my country will be benefitted having different information related to conservation of wildlife and management of zoo through exchange of views and ideas.

Narayan C. Roy, Rangpur Zoo

- to get some assistance from the South Asian zoo organisation to help improve and modernize my zoo. This meeting will help us to share information, technologies, cooperation on

WHY WE CAME

The South Asian zoo meeting evening ice-breaker,
Hotel Clarion, 3 August 2000



Participants share their hopes for the meeting at the first introduction.

regional basis, coordination amongst the south Asian zoos. I think this is the first step of zoo conservation of wildlife as well as nature unitedly.

Shitol Kumar Nath, Chittagong Zoo

- I want to gather information from a South Asian Zoo Association about animal exchange. This meeting will be helpful to me and my country to gather various knowledge and build a network of South Asian Zoos. It will help us all.

Dr. Mohammed Shahidullah, Dakha Zoo

- to form a South Asian Zoo Association.
- insure that the association will guide government/people about zoos – and educate people about the ills of departmental transfers.
- pursue animal exchanges

This meeting should become a success to develop regional and international cooperation for zoo development, management and conservation of wildlife throughout the world.

Mansoor Qazi, Karachi Zoo and Safari Park

- exchange views and expertise as well as surplus animals
- help provide facilities for the betterment of zoos.
- I hope we will share our knowledge with one another about legislation, conservation, breeding techniques, zoo architecture, veterinary aspects and many other technical aspects

R.K. Sahu, Ahmedabad Zoo

- share my knowledge and ideas
- transfer technology.
- get information exchange on breeding species.

Geetha Shreshta, Central Zoo --

- to share views and exchange ideas with other regional zoos.

Ang Phuri Sherpa, Central Zoo --

- I want the South Asian Zoos to become a consolidated force as a region in the world and to work towards the 3 C's of conservation.

R.K. Shreshta, Central Zoo -- Want to promote unity among South Asian Zoos and the exchange of ideas.

Dr. Ghimere, Central Zoo

- this meeting should become a success to develop regional understanding for zoo development and management.



Participants of the First South Asian Regional Zoo Meeting

Zoo Personnel

Mr. Mansoor Qazi, Director,
Karachi Zoo, Karachi Safari Park Pakistan

Ms. Uzma Khan, Education Officer,
Lahore Zoo, Pakistan

Mr. Mazhar Hussain, Director,
Fatima Jenna Park, Islamabad

Dr. Arshad H. Toosey, Director,
Lahore Zoo, Pakistan

Dr. Mohammad Islam, Curator,
Dakha Zoo, Bangladesh

Dr. MD. Shahidullah, Deputy Curator
Dakha Zoo, Bangladesh

Mr. Shital Kumar Nath, Curator & Member
Secretary, Chittagong Zoo, Bangladesh

Dr. Narayan C. Roy, Deputy Curator
Rangpur zoo, Bangladesh

Mr. Senarath Gunasena, Director
National Zoological Gardens, Sri Lanka

Dr. Jayanthi Alahakoon, Veterinary Surgeon
National Zoological Gardens, Sri Lanka

Dr. R. K. Sahu, Superintendent, Kamla Nehru
Zoo, Ahmedabad, India

Mr. R. K. Shreshta, Director
Central Zoo, Nepal

Mr. Ang Phuri Shreshta, Education Officer
Central Zoo, Nepal

Dr. B. K. Jha, Veterinary Officer
Central Zoo, Nepal

Dr. Madhav Ghimere, Veterinary Officer
Central Zoo, Nepal

Mrs. Geetha Shreshta, FOZ Coordinator
Central Zoo, Nepal

Facilitators

Ms. Sally Walker, Founder/Secretary
Zoo Outreach Organisation, CBSG, S. Asia,

Mr. Sanjay Molur, Sr. Programme Officer
Zoo Outreach Organisation/CBSG, S. Asia

Dr. B. A. Daniel, Scientist
Zoo Outreach Organisation/CBSG, S. Asia

Guests/Observers

Mr. Anselm de Silva, Founder/Convenor
Amphibian & Reptile Research Organisation of
Sri Lanka / CBSG, Sri Lanka

Mr. Jayantha Jayewardene, Managing Trustee,
Biodiversity and Elephant Conservation Trust,
Sri Lanka

South Asian Zoo Association -- Discussion Summary

On 4 August, after hearing state of the zoos country reports and individual zoo reports, participants of the South Asian Zoo meeting discussed some of the problems faced by south Asian zoos in context of the Association topic.

Discussions concluded that South Asian zoos suffered from very similar problems, the most severe of which, at least for the border countries, was isolation. Until now, cooperation could take place only on the Directors' personal capacity and this was very difficult.

Discussants concluded that institutionalizing cooperation with a coordinating body was urgently required. A concern was expressed that the association should not be affected by biased politics or individual politicians. (Zoos influenced by politicians)

It was felt by discussants that since Nepal is a neutral country may be ideal for hosting the association. Director, Central Zoo suggested that KMTNC/ Central Zoo should host the association within its structure since it hosted the meetings. It was pointed out that the Association could not be a strong entity unless it was registered with its own constitution and by-laws.

It was discussed to institutionalize the association with in the existing framework of SAARC which is based in Nepal. This would involve the Association being registered but also being declared a "technical committee" of SAARC which would carry many, many benefits. Since discussants had no clear knowledge of the working of SAARC it was decided to conduct a fact finding exercise and return to the subject. If this would be possible it was felt that SAARC will be able to smoothen relationships. It would also provide considerable financial support to the association as one of its technical committees.

Nepal Zoo proposed to invite all SAARC zoos to join the association as a result

of this meeting, however, not all zoos or zoological bodies are of a standard that would make the association proud. The point of having a regional association was to be on equal footing with the world's zoo, which requires strong ethics and standards. There are many questions about membership which would require careful thought. Also it was not known whether certain zoos would require government permission to join a regional body.

Finally it was fully agreed on the following points

- to go for a regional association
- for Central zoo to investigate formalities of registration in Nepal
- Director of Central Zoo would be "Convenor" of the association
- An ad hoc committee with one or two representatives from all South Asian countries would be set up for the time being
- the association will function as an unregistered body until all above questions could be answered
- by-laws would be drafted by 2-3 people and circulated by the Convenor
- it should be open to more than Director level as experience of others demonstrated such restrictions were not productive of growth and creativity
- Zoo Outreach Organisation's offer to provide office, communications and administrative support until the association is established and self-sustaining was gratefully accepted.
- the organising committee will consist of one representative from every country with access to E-mail
- the association requires a strong philosophy and objectives to convince officials of its good intentions

Organising committee :

Convenor

Director, Central Zoo, Nepal

Country representatives

Central Zoo, Nepal
Lahore Zoo, Pakistan
National Zool. Gardens, Sri Lanka
Dakha Zoo, Bangladesh
Ahmedabad Zoo, India



Report of the first meeting of ad hoc committee to create an official structure for the association of South Asian zoos

The Convenor and organising committee of the association met for the first time on 12 August 2000 in Directors' office at Central Zoo.

Present were

R. K. Shreshta, Central Zoo, Kathmandu, Nepal, Convenor and Nepal representative
Arshad H. Toosey, Director, Lahore Zoo, Lahore, Pakistan, Pakistan representative
R. K. Sahu, Director, Kamala Nehru Zoo, Ahmedabad, India, Indian representative
M. Shahidullah, Dy. Curator, Dakha Zoological Gardens, Dakha, Bangladesh, Bangladesh representative
S. Gunasena, Director, National Zoological Gardens, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan Representative
Sally Walker, Co-member/Advisor later approved as "Patron"

R. K. Shreshta welcomed the group and ascertained representation from every country sending around a sign up sheet. Shreshta proposed to the group that Sally Walker should be named Patron of the association in perpetuity due to her efforts to bring the countries together for the sake of forming an association. This was agreed.

Naming of Association — S.A.Z.A.R.C.

After extended discussion and offerings of alternatives, the consensus of the first meeting of ad hoc Committee for formalising the association of South Asian zoos was to propose the name of the "South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation or SAZARC (pron. "sahz ark")

The name was decided on the basis of several factors, e.g.

- inclusion of key words "South Asia", "Association"
- the strength and sound of the acronym "SAZARC" - pron "sahz ark"
- uniqueness of acronym when compared to similar letter configurations (e.g. SEAZA, etc.)
- the alliteration with "ark", remindive of zoo ark
- easy to pronounce
- the inclusion of the words "regional cooperation" are unique in the configuration of zoo associations of the world and also desirable due to their similarity to the official South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation which covers all aspects of cooperation in the S. Asian region.
- the inclusion of the word "cooperation" in the name itself is very desirable since cooperation between zoos is one of the major objectives of an association.

Other suggestions for a name, which were rejected at this time for various reasons were :

South Asian Zoo Directors Association SAZDA

Rejected as the committee did not want association restricted to directors, even in name due to bad experience of other associations with such restrictions, (Pron. "sah zuh dah")

Zoological Gardens Association of South Asia -- ZGASA

Liked very much due to its dignity but rejected due to the cumbersomeness of the acronym (pron. "zuh-gah-sah")

South Asian Zoo Association-- SAZA

Felt to be too similar to SEAZA

South Asian Zoological Gardens Association-- SAZGA

Liked very much but acronym was felt to be somewhat awkward and weak (sahz - gah)

Association of South Asian Zoos -- ASAZ

Liked but acronym was not as strong as final choice (ah-saz)

Association of South Asian Zoological Gardens -- ASAZG

Liked but acronym awkward (pron "Ah sah zugh")

South Asian Association of Zoological Gardens -- SAAZG

Liked but acronym awkward (pron Saah-Zuh-ga or saaz gah)

South Asian Association of Zoological Gardens and Aquaria

SAAZGA -- Not accepted because group did not want to include aquaria separately at this time. (Saah Zuh Ga)

Official steps for the association

Various tasks in regularising and registering the association were discussed. R. K. Shreshta will consult materials from other zoo associations and, with the help of some person with legal skills and knowledge of zoo scenario and South Asian situation, draft a first attempt at a constitution and by-laws. He suggested that he would submit this initially to Walker for suggestions and then send it to all the members for suggestions. It can be officially proposed at the next meeting and discussed with the other zoo personnel before approval.

Shreshta and Walker cautioned against making anything permanent very fast, such as registration, constitution, pointing out the many complexities to be considered in having something that would serve the needs of all the countries in the region as well as satisfying the norms and ethics of the international zoo community. It was pointed out that R. K. Shreshta would be visiting USA soon where he could discuss many aspects of the running of an association with experienced people. Likewise, he may get a chance to attend other meetings coming up where he can discuss with persons running associations around the world. Other members of the committee also can study the materials provided to them for this purpose and suggest ideas.

Next annual meeting

Mr. S. Gunasena offered to host the next meeting of the association which will be held, in keeping with the recent meeting and international practice, just before the annual CBSG meeting. It was agreed that the meetings could be longer. Some dates during the first two weeks of September will be fixed by Gurusena after consulting with hotels and airlines to obtain lowest rates. Gunasena said he could manage local hospitality with resources collected in Sri Lanka but not flights. However he will work with Air Lanka to get a special concession for the workshop. Walker agreed to coordinate fund-raising for flights for the Bangladesh and Pakistan participants. Gunasena and Walker will begin working on the meeting immediately.

Communication

Members of this committee will stay in touch on email which will be copied to all.



Zoos and Breeding Centres of South Asia (about 279)

Country	Zoo names where feasible	Governing Authority	Total
India	About 250 zoos of all sizes	Central Zoo Authority, state and municipal governments, private authorities	250 +
Pakistan	Bawalpur Zoo*	Government	40+/-
	Hyderabad Zoo*	Government	
	Lahore Zoo*	Government	
	Karachi Zoo*	Government	
	Karachi Safari Park*	Government	
	Islamabad Zoo*	Government	
	Clifton Aquarium*	Government	
	Jalore Park*	Government	
	Lohibheer Wildlife Park*	Government	
	22 breeding centres	Government	
	Jungle Kingdom	Private	
	Landhi Korangi Zoo, Karachi	Private	
	3 - 6 Private Zoos Sindh Province	Private	
	Murrey Wildlife Park	Private	
Sri Lanka	Dehiwala Zoo	National Zoological Gardens Authority	3
	Pinnewala Elephant Orphanage	National Zoological Gardens Authority	
	Pinnewala Zoo (new - coming up)	National Zoological Gardens Authority	
Bangladesh	Dakha Zoo	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Department of Livestock Service. Government of Bangladesh	7
	Rangpur Zoo	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Department of Livestock Service. Government of Bangladesh	
	Chittagong Zoo;	Local authority	
	Rajshahi Zoo	Local authority	
	Comilla Zoo	Local authority	
	Khulna Zoo	Army owned	
Nepal	Central Zoo (the national zoo)	King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation	6
	Nepal Ganj (small park with a few animals)	City	
	Hetaunda (small park with a few animals)	City	
	Elephant Breeding Centre	Dept. of National Parks and WL Conservation	
	Gharial Breeding Centre	Dept. of National Parks and WL Conservation	
	Musk Deer farm	Dept. of National Parks and WL Conservation	



SAZARC Photo Album -- First SA Zoo meeting



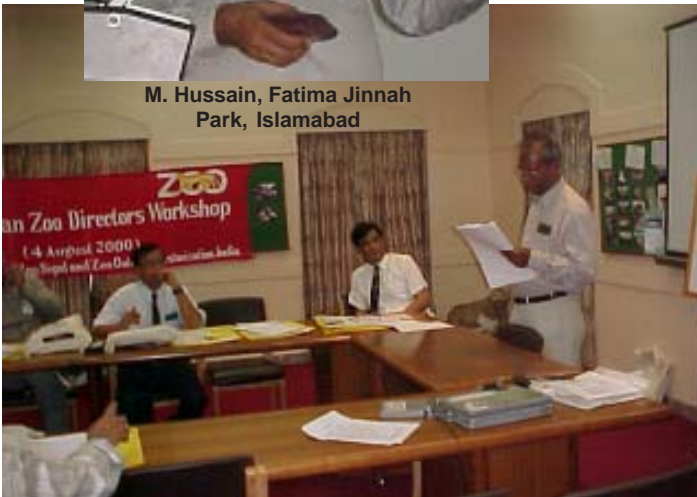
Arshad Toosey, Lahore Zoo



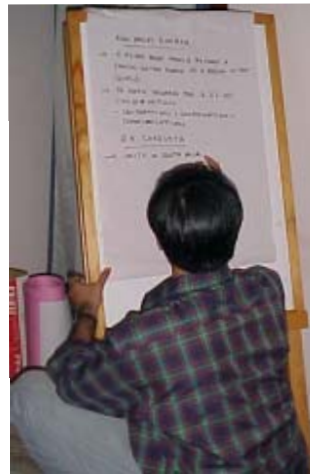
The whole group meeting -- discussion of South Asian Zoo problems and prospects



M. Hussain, Fatima Jinnah Park, Islamabad



All participants gave a Report on their country and their zoos



All comments were recorded



Dr. S. Islam, Dakha Zoo



Dr. R. K. Sahu, India



Uzma Khan, Lahore Zoo



Senarath Gunasena, Colombo Zoo



Participants contributed information about their animals