

PAKISTAN WILDLIFE NEWS

July 2011

Volume 3, Issue VII

ISSN : 2077-9305



-HAZARDS OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED RICE

-ANIMAL PRICES RISING DUE TO SMUGGLING, EXPORT

-MEAT PRICES GO UP IN PINDI, ISLAMABAD

-POLICY TO SET UP FOREST UNIVERSITY IN KP

BRC
BIORESOURCE RESEARCH CENTRE

Pakistan Wildlife News

Issue VII, Volume 3

Inside this issue...

Bioresource Research Center 34 Bazaar Road G – 6 / 4 Islamabad Pakistan	Festival organised to unite people for nature conservation <i>The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Chotiari Conservation.....</i>	3
Phone +92 (0)51 2278044 +92 (0)2831321	Hazards of genetically modified rice <i>IT has been learnt that research on genetically modified rice has started</i>	4
Fax +92(0)51 227 5899	Pakistan-India Conflict Hurts Humans: Helps Wildlife <i>In the last twenty years, literally thousands of people have died in Kashmir.....</i>	5
Email pbrc@pbrc.edu.pk	Black partridge vanishing from wild <i>Black partridge is one of the unique species of birds that is found in Pakistan. This bird is famous for its high-pitched</i>	6
Website www.pbrc.edu.pk	Trekking to tranquility <i>As you take a minute to soak up the scene, you know for sure it is the closest thing to heaven. That</i>	7
A company established under section 42 of Companies Ordinance, 1984	Leather sector to approach court for ban on animal smuggling <i>Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) has decided to approach four provincial High Courts and Islamabad High Court</i>	9
Company Registration No. 00000006755/20070601	Animal prices rising due to smuggling, export <i>Pakistan's leather sector has predicted that since the country is experiencing a grave dearth of livestock due to irrational</i>	10
	Chopping of mangroves <i>Political influence bars police to take action against mafia KARACHI: The police refused to take any action against the</i>	11
	Afghanistan Bright Spot: Wildlife Surviving in War Zones <i>First survey in decades reveals surprising number of bears,.....</i>	12
	Skeleton on the wall: Blue whale comes to the jungle <i>A 90-foot skeleton of a blue whale is being placed on the exterior</i>	13
	Meat prices go up in Pindi, Islamabad <i>Butchers are selling mutton at Rs500-Rs540 per kg and beef at Rs320-Rs340 per kg in different markets</i>	14
	Elusive Snow Leopards Thrive in Surprising Spot <i>Even big cats like a good scratch: A wild snow leopard in Afghanistan. Credit: Wildlife Conservation Society.....</i>	15
	Former govt ruined Murree's beauty <i>Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif gave a detailed briefing to PML-N chief Muhammad Nawaz Sharif</i>	20
	Policy to set up forest university in KP <i>Minister for Environment Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Wajid Ali Khan has said that after devolution of Pakistan.....</i>	22
	Fairbanks scientists plan to use drones to study wildlife <i>Could it be only a matter of time before wildlife biologists can do nearly all their work from behind a desk? Scientists</i>	28



New Released Bear at Balkasar
Sanctuary

Festival organised to unite people for nature conservation

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Chotiari Conservation Forum organized a nature festival the other day in Ketī Bunder, Keenjhar Lake and Pai Forest areas to raise awareness among the local communities to conserve natural resources, grazing fields, wildlife and forests.

The event attracted a large number of herdsmen, fishermen and farmers living near the Chotiari Reservoir and adjacent lakes.

The event started with the swimming competition in Baqar Lake, which now is named Chotiari Reservoir and is spread over an area of 18,000 hectares. As the event started, people from all walks of life came with their children to entertain themselves with colourful activities. Boat race, local indigenous games, theatre for awareness, tableaux performed by local school children and Sufi singers were the major activities, besides presenting awards to journalists for their contribution to promote nature conservation.

A WWF conservation officer Moula Bakhsh Mallah said that it was the first event of its kind which was aimed to unite the community people on one platform for sustainable development and nature conservation.

He said that it was the area where traditional people had developed wildlife conservation zones long ago. There were deer, hog deer, hare, migratory birds and partridges of both species brown partridge and black partridge 20 years back. The area was considered natural habitats for threatened crocodiles and otters. There were 60 fish species in the lakes, some of which have come under the reservoir area. But now, due to water shortage, many local fish species here have become extinct.

Coordinator Indus for All Programmes WWF Pakistan Nasir Panhwar said that the area people attended the festival in large numbers because there was a big vacuum of entertainment and they were facing acute poverty and destruction of natural resources.

He also appreciated the theatre groups and school children, who

during their presentation portrayed the issues, ignorance by the government authorities and community itself and urged

the need to own these resources and protect the same for their future

generations. The residents of these areas used to live a prosperous life 40—50 years back. There were thick forests, natural grazing fields, fresh water, cultivation and the communities like herdsmen, farmers and fishermen had been living peacefully, enjoying the wealth of nature. Each family had herds of



livestock. Each tribe had its separate state in terms of their herds grazing, cultivation and fishing.

Nobody from outside was allowed to hunt a bird or any animal. But now these people themselves are living in danger because of the changing approach of feudal lords and influential people, who want to destroy the natural beauty by chopping off trees, which was home to several wildlife species.

President Hur Historical Society, Mir Mohammed Nizamani said that the area where Chotiari Reservoir had been formed was the Makhi Forest, the centre from where the Hur Movement was launched against the British rule. The British destroyed villages of the local people, thinking they might be supporting the Hur insurgents and brought warrior tribes from other parts and settled them in this area to counter the Hur Movement. Hur insurgents devised a strategy and cut the major Nara Canal in 1942, which inundated the entire area and compelled enemies to migrate to other areas. The artificial flood formed several small ponds and lakes, which were still popular with different names. He criticized that there was no documentation of these historical truths.

Justifying his claim, Nizamani said that there were beautifully built buildings — natural resorts — at islands of the Baqar Lake established by local feudal lords, which were now looking like ghost palaces, because they were inside the water. The people used to invite friends and officials for enjoying hunting in the area, the natural habitats of birds and animals, like partridges and deer.

(26 June 2011 From The International News)

Hazards of genetically modified rice

IT has been learnt that research on genetically modified rice has started at the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), Islamabad, which is an alarming situation and harmful for human beings.

In this connection, I would like to present some facts. The owner/producer of genetically modified rice is China where its cultivation is being disputed.

Initially, two strains of genetically modified rice were approved for open field experiments but not for commercial sale.

However, it has been spreading illegally for years in China.

A joint investigation by four government departments has found that illegal genetically modified seeds are available in several provinces of China because of weak management.

In a conference chaired by Vice Premier Li Keqiang, the highly-respected agronomist Tong Pingya blasted Chinese scientists for “treating the Chinese people like guinea pigs”. China does not need genetically modified rice. They demanded public debate and clear labelling of products containing genetically modified organisms.

According to Green Peace’s Fang, “Genetically modified seeds cost two to five times more than ordinary seeds and in terms of yield there isn’t really a big difference.”

Being an exporter of rice, I would say that international buyers of rice desire clear labelling (genetically modified and organism-free) of rice on each and every bag otherwise its trade might be refused. It means genetically modified rice is harmful for human beings.

Actually genetically modified rice is the feed of animals like pigs, rats, etc., for their rapid growth. For example, feed is being given to chicken and fish containing dangerous chemicals, causing fatal, chronic diseases and deaths.

The scientists of China are opposing the cultivation of genetically modified rice whereas we are taking keen interest in its research which is incomprehensible.

It is feared that illegal/unapproved genetically modified rice seeds would be used in our country like hybrid rice which contains high aflatoxin which causes cancer and other diseases. The PARC is, therefore, requested to take up the matter on top priority and stop further research on genetically modified rice in the best interest of the country.

(GADA HUSSAIN MAHESSAR July 3, 2011 from Down .com)

Loss of livestock, poultry results in malnutrition

Analyst and Head of Institute of Social Movements Pakistan Zulfiqar Shah told The News that there was not a situation of starvation as food was available to the flood-hit people, but there were cases of malnutrition as people were not receiving milk and its bi-products due to loss of hundreds of thousands of animals.

Livestock sector has emerged as a priority sector only recently. In the rural areas, livestock is considered a securer source of income for small farmers and the landless.

According to the latest Economic Survey of Pakistan, livestock is the best hope for poverty alleviation as it can uplift the socioeconomic conditions of our rural masses.



KARACHI: Loss of livestock and poultry in floods of last fiscal year has resulted in malnutrition of millions of people in the country.

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

Official figures show that an estimated 187,000 large animals, 253,380 small ones (total 440,380 animals) and 9.94 million poultry were lost to the floods.

The total loss in livestock (large and small animals) and poultry stood at 0.3 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively.

Continued...

The steps taken by the government included establishment of emergency relief camps, treatment and vaccination of animals, and supply of fodder in the flood-affected areas. In these camps, 7.2 million animals were treated and 7.9 million animals were vaccinated.

One official document says that the overall thrust of the **government's livestock policy is to foster "private sector-led development with public sector providing enabling environment through policy interventions and capacity building for improved livestock husbandry practices"**.

The emphasis will be on improving per unit animal . productivity and moving from subsistence to market-oriented rearing and commercial livestock farming to meet the

domestic demand and export surplus

The objective is to exploit the potential of livestock sector and use it as an engine for economic growth and food security for the country, leading to rural population empowerment and **rural socioeconomic development. Livestock sector's** prospective role towards rural economic development may well be recognized from the fact that 35-40 million rural people depend on livestock.

(Shahid Shah 8 July 2011 *From The International News*)

Pakistan-India Conflict Hurts Humans: Helps Wildlife



In the last twenty years, literally thousands of people have died in Kashmir, a region in Northern India where violence between **the two countries is at its peak. However, there's been an** unlikely beneficiary to that violence, and that is the endangered species the Kashmir stag, or hangul, whose population has actually grown recently.

In fact, wildlife officials report that in a recent wildlife census, the hangul population has increased to 218 as of March 2011.

That may not seem like a lot (and to be fair, it's not) but it's much more than the mere 175 that existed in 2009.

The hangul is the official state animal of Jammu and Kashmir and is a type of red deer which is known for having huge antlers that may have as many as sixteen points. So why the population increase?

Gun control is not an insignificant factor. According to The Guardian, when the anti-India insurgency in Kashmir first began in 1989, the locals were banned from having guns. If you were caught with a gun, you were treated as an insurgent, and this led people to be hesitant about shooting animals, including the hangul.

Vast stretches of forest in the region have become battlegrounds, so locals no longer go into the forest to hunt **animals. So, locals can't go into the forests and they can't own** guns. This is all very, very bad for human rights and the end to **the conflict, but it's apparently very, very good for endangered** species of the region.

According to the same wildlife census, there has also been an increase in the local population of leopards and bears. This is all a very mixed bag

(By Manda Jamsey 08 July 2011)

Black partridge vanishing from wild



Black partridge is one of the unique species of birds that is found in Pakistan. This bird is famous for its high-pitched chirping sound and is usually found in interior Sindh. But, it is now vanishing fast from its habitat due to natural and man-made reasons.

Keeping black partridge in rural Sindh and suburbs of Karachi has been a favourite hobby for many people. Some keep them in their homes as pets, while some people keep them for gambling purposes.

In Pakistan, Black partridge chirping competitions are also held in which thousands of people take part. They bring their birds in the competition where they chirp from sunrise to sunset and the most melodious of them wins and the prize is then given to its owner. If it stops chirping earlier during the show, then it loses the game.

Project Director Sindh Wildlife Department Hussain Bux Bhagat said that presently the population of black partridge is on the decline due to natural and manmade reasons. Besides its hunting, the farmers use pesticides and poison grains and grass, which this bird eats and dies instantly. This unchecked practice has affected the population of this beautiful bird badly, wiping it out from the natural wild.

Now in the entire country (Pakistan), only Nara Game Reserve is being considered the only natural habitat of this species. Otherwise, its population has vanished from other areas in Pakistan.

Bhagat said that increasing population, neglect of ecological factor in development works and unchecked hunting has badly affected the abode of these birds. But, he said that use of pesticides in crops and the bird's beauty itself are its enemies.

He informed that in order to catch this bird, the poachers use a technique. First they spot an area where they guess availability of more partridges of the same species. Then they keep a black partridge in a cage surrounded by bushes and install small nets at the entrance of the cage. When the partridge sitting in a cage starts chirping, other partridges get attracted towards the sound and get trapped in the nets.

(By Jan Khaskheli 08-July-2011 The International News)

Leather sector to approach court for ban on animal smuggling

KARACHI: Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) has decided to approach four provincial High Courts and Islamabad High Court against export and smuggling of live animals Thursday.

The PTA has support from all leather sector associations including garments gloves and footwear association besides FPCCI and Lahore, Karachi and Sialkot Chambers have assured their support for the national cause.

Talking to Daily Times, Khurshid Alam Chairman PTA said Federal Ministry of Livestock and Dairy Development failed to take any immediate action to stop export/smuggling despite assurance to PTA in a meeting on June 27, 2011. Alam said the core issue of the export/smuggling of live animals from Pakistan to Iran and Afghanistan is based on the statistics. He announced launching a campaign in print and electronic media with the financial support of all sector associations in an effort to counter smuggling and export of live animals.

He said legal export of live animals from Pakistan to Iran and Afghanistan, which has recently been allowed by the government, resulted in shortage of raw skins for the domestic industry and increasing meat prices in Pakistan for the general masses.

Continued...

He said the concerned ministries also failed to impose a complete ban on export of wet blue and leather split leather of all kinds, raw hides and skins and pickled leather from Pakistan despite assurances to PTA in various meetings. **“The concrete measures would ensure availability of basic raw materials to leather sector,” he added.**

Agha Saiddain, Chairman PTA Skin and Hide said around 20,000 live animals were being smuggled from the country on a daily basis whereas the government has allocated export of 20,000 live animals in a month.

Agha said during 2007-2008, the export of leather and leather-made items stood at \$1.220 billion, in 2008-09 it was \$959 million and \$867 million in 2009-10, thus export on aggregate declined 30 percent. He said from 2005



to 2010, the PTA members paid Rs 879.253 million as Export Development Surcharge at the rate of 0.25 percent, Rs 51.20 million Withholding Tax at the rate of 1 percent and same amount of Excise Duty at the same rate. Fifteen (15) percent flood surcharge on income tax, 2.5 percent special excise duty and taxes on import of machinery and equipment (17 percent sales tax and 5 percent customs duty) are additional taxes. He said due to slow production in the sector besides load shedding of power and gas, around 200,000 skilled and semi skilled workforce has lost jobs in 6 months.

(By Rozi Syed 05 July 2011 From Daily Times)

Trekking to tranquility

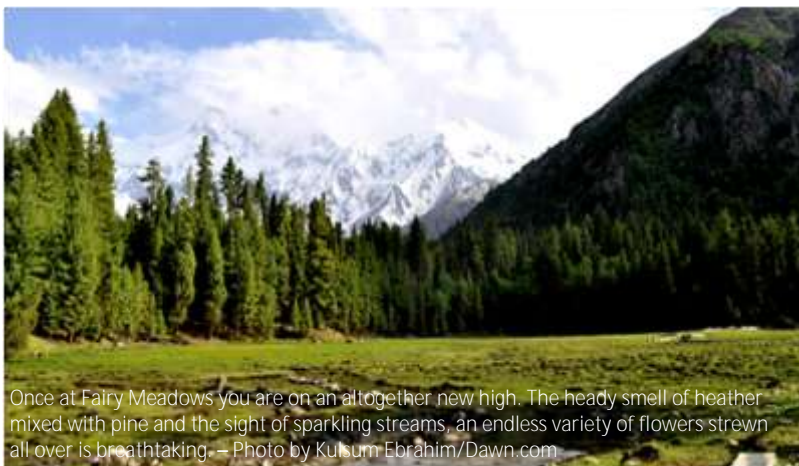
As you take a minute to soak up the scene, you know for sure it is the closest thing to heaven. That is the first thought that comes to mind after a four-hour treacherous uphill and breathless trek from Fairy Point, the last stop before you head for the enchanted land where they say fairies and demons have ruled forever.

It is no exaggeration if I say, the place is right out of **a children's story book** – rolling hills and sun-drenched meadows where cows, horses and goats graze away happily till sunset. Skirting the meadows are thick pine woods and then the perfect and final backdrop – the majestic snow-clad Himalayan mountain range.

And if you are lucky as we were, you can get a clear view of the towering Nanga Parbat, an 8,215 meter **peak, also known as the 'killer' mountain.** Google the name and you will find out it is the ninth highest mountain in the world and the second highest in Pakistan after K2. More so, if the heavens are kind on you, you may just see a full rainbow, or even a double rainbow, after the rains clear the sky.

These picture perfect grasslands of Fairy Meadows, **locally known as 'joot' are located at an altitude of 3,000 metres** at the foot of Nanga Parbat, in the Diamer district of Gilgit-Baltistan, formerly known as the Northern Areas. But getting to the meadows is a torturous two-day journey – scorching heat, a bad road network, no washroom facilities, but plenty of boulders to go behind and brooks to wash up. Good mash ki daal and hot tandoori roti downed with scalding cups of sweet doodh-patti make up for these transitory uneasiness.

Continued...



Once at Fairy Meadows you are on an altogether new high. The heady smell of heather mixed with pine and the sight of sparkling streams, an endless variety of flowers strewn all over is breathtaking. – Photo by Kulsum Ebrahim/Dawn.com

When the metalled road ends at Raikot Bridge, you change over to a 4X4 jeep for a perilous journey to Tato village. Halfway there, the road comes to a rude end and so you lug your backpacks and begin over through rock-strewn, uneven surface. Thankfully just a hundred meters ahead, just when the luggage begins to take its toll, you find a pick-up waiting to take you (almost) to Fairy Point, a halfway inn to get your bearings before the big trek to Fairy Meadows. The journey from Raikot Bridge to Fairy Point can take a good two to three hours.

So as I was saying, once at Fairy Meadows you are on an altogether new high. The heady smell of heather mixed with pine and the sight of sparkling streams, an endless variety of flowers strewn all over is breathtaking.

Peering closely, you find artistically crafted webs, mushrooms and orange coloured moss on precariously perched boulders. The forest floor is littered with pine cones, big and small for you to take your pick. The magical place brings out the child in you as you explore the woods. The figment of your imagination goes at break-neck speed as you go deeper and deeper **into the forest, finding a branch shaped like an elephant's wrinkled foot, or an emperor's throne to sit on, a photo-frame made of jumbled roots....**

The sight of a herd of baby goats scampering and scuttling stirring up a cloud of dust with their tiny feet, or cows munching away lazily, soaking in the sun and the horses knee deep in the marshy grasslands are sights that behold you and you know will remain embedded in your memory.

You can amble aimlessly for hours and at every few yards you discover something new. You see at close quarters how the power of flowing water is harnessed and used to generate electricity in the most primitive but effective manner, only to **marvel at man's ingenuity.**

A hot cup of kehwa awaits you at your quaint little cottage after every trek. The locals add an herb called tumuru (smells like oregano) that helps ease altitude sickness. You get an instant shot of tranquility and peace, maybe ten-folds more potent than you would find, say when you reach Nathiagali.

And yet there is not complete solitude. How can there be when young and able-bodied men and women come in droves. But there is something nice about these people. They are happy, courteous, helpful and friendly.

Maybe it's the clean mountain air you think. Nature does that to you, keeps the beast away and brings out the goodness in you, one realises.

And if daytime is heavenly, the dusk and then night fall are surreal. First the mountains turn gold at dusk; next the sky becomes **silvery, speckled with millions of stars. And that's not all. Around** midnight, when the moon comes out, you see how it lends mystery to the woods, lighting up the snow-clad mountains. **But it's** not eerie at all, just magical! Most people visiting Fairy Meadows usually go to Bayal Camp, about two-hour trek (not as arduous) and then further up to View Point. Serious trekkers spend the **night there, and make a journey to Nanga Parbat's Base Camp** the following day. Bayal is also meadow-like but with small hillocks and Nanga Parbat seems a lot closer. If you ask me I prefer the Fairy Meadows area and the forests around it. Warning: The journey is not for the faint-hearted, the fuss-pots or those used to luxury hotel stays. Toilets (desi style) and showers are communal. There is plenty of water but hot water is available in the morning for the early birds only. In the night, you may have to brush your teeth with icy water with the help of a torch. Bedding is provided, but if you are a cleanliness freak, I suggest you keep a couple of sheets in your backpack.

Must Take: A chapstick is a very good idea as are small bottles of sanitiser and liquid hand wash. Shoes should be a tried and tested old faithful pair. A good sturdy walking stick if you are fifty plus, a small water bottle that can be slung around the neck or one shoulder, sun-glasses, a good sun-block and cap will all come in handy. A camera to take your own set of pictures!

(By Zofeen T. Ebrahim 05 July 2011 From Down.com)

Leather sector to approach court for ban on animal smuggling

KARACHI: Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA) has decided to approach four provincial High Courts and Islamabad High Court against export and smuggling of live animals Thursday.

The PTA has support from all leather sector associations including garments gloves and footwear association besides FPCCI and Lahore, Karachi and Sialkot Chambers have assured their support for the national cause.

Talking to Daily Times, Khurshid Alam Chairman PTA said Federal Ministry of Livestock and Dairy Development failed to take any immediate action to stop export/smuggling despite assurance to PTA in a meeting on June 27, 2011. Alam said the core issue of the export/smuggling of live animals from Pakistan to Iran and Afghanistan is based on the statistics. He announced launching a campaign in print and electronic media with the financial support of all sector associations in an effort to counter smuggling and export of live animals.

He said legal export of live animals from Pakistan to Iran and Afghanistan, which has recently been allowed by the government, resulted in shortage of raw skins for the domestic industry and increasing meat prices in Pakistan for the general masses.

He said the concerned ministries also failed to impose a complete ban on export of wet blue and leather split leather of all kinds, raw hides and skins and pickled leather from Pakistan despite assurances to PTA in various meetings. **“The concrete measures would ensure availability of basic raw materials to leather sector,” he added.**

Agha Saiddain, Chairman PTA Skin and Hide said around 20,000 live animals were being smuggled from the country on a daily basis whereas the government has allocated export of 20,000 live animals in a month.

Agha said during 2007-2008, the export of leather and leather-made items stood at \$1.220 billion, in 2008-09 it was \$959 million and \$867 million in 2009-10, thus export on aggregate declined 30 percent. He said from 2005 to 2010, the PTA members paid Rs 879.253 million as Export Development Surcharge at the rate of 0.25 percent, Rs 51.20 million Withholding Tax at the rate of 1 percent and same amount of Excise Duty at the same rate. Fifteen (15) percent flood surcharge on income tax, 2.5 percent special excise duty and taxes on import of machinery and equipment (17 percent sales tax and 5 percent customs duty) are additional taxes. He said due to slow production in the sector besides load shedding of power and gas, around 200,000 skilled and semi skilled workforce has lost jobs in 6 months.

(By Razi Syed 08 July 2011 From Daily Times)

Dairy farming offers 25% return

Dairy farming offers a lucrative opportunity for investment to corporate and trading companies as the sector can provide a return of more than 25 per cent, an official of Pakistan Dairy Development Company (PDDC) said.

Talking to The Express Tribune during a visit to a model dairy farm, PDDC Sindh Chapter chief Dr Aziz Ahmed said with significant investment, the dairy farming industry can be developed to such an extent that it could compete effectively with major exporters – Australia, New Zealand and Holland – in the international market.

However, he said investors and industrialists were not aware of the potential of dairy farming and its significance in national economy, providing an opportunity to few companies which had established their monopoly in the business, including milk processing. If the government provided funds to PDDC for keeping milk-producing animals and milk processing, the company would be able to identify potential industrialists who would be able to process and pack milk according to international health standards and sell at attractive prices, he said.

Continued...

According to Ahmed, around 800,000 milk-producing animals are being taken care of in Karachi and in its outskirts, but due to lack of knowledge the dairy farmers are getting milk through traditional and outdated methods, which gave a lower output.

“Owing to lack of awareness, the farmers are wasting a significant part of their profits as well.”



The local industry can compete with major exporters Australia, New Zealand and Holland in the international market, according to Pakistan Dairy Development Company. PHOTO: FILE

He said Pakistan Dairy Development Company, which was a non-profit organisation, had been providing financial and technical assistance to dairy farmers, but its operations had come to a halt because of non-release of funds by the government for the last one year.

To a question, Ahmed said a large number of farmers were using a certain type of injection to get milk from animals on a continuous basis, adding this had affected the total output of milk. In addition to this, animals are given water for two times a day, which has kept milk production per animal below five litres a day. However, in Australia, New Zealand and the US, average milk production per animal is 20 to 25 litres a day.

(By Ehtesham Mufti 08 July 2011 From Express Tribune)

Animal prices rising due to smuggling, export

LAHORE: Pakistan's leather sector has predicted that since the country is experiencing a grave dearth of livestock due to irrational export and unabated smuggling of cattle to the neighbouring countries, the prices of sacrificial animals are most likely to double by the coming Eid-ul-Azha.

According to fresh data released by the Pakistan Tanners Association in this context Thursday, over 2, 80,000 animals have been exported between 2006 and February 2011, which adequately explains why the prices of mutton have surged from Rs230 per kilogram in 2006 to over Rs500 in 2011.

Similarly, the prices of beef have also gone up from Rs120 per kilogram in 2006 to Rs270 per kilogram currently due to the reasons cited above. The export and smuggling of Pakistani livestock to Iran and Afghanistan are being named as the major factors behind the 30 percent plunge in leather sector exports from \$1.22 billion in 2007 to \$867 million in 2010.

Pakistan Tanners Association, the representative trade association of country's leather sector, has calculated that in 2006, around 16 million goat, cow and camel skins were collected throughout the country on Eid-ul-Azha and by end 2010, this number had dropped way below the six million mark.

Chairman Pakistan Tanners Association, Khurshid Alam, told our sources that the regular supply of hides and skins from the slaughtering houses in the country has also plunged steeply by 66 percent during the last five years, from 21 million in 2006 to just seven million in 2010. He said the workforce in the leather industry has also decreased from 0.7 million in 2006 to about 0.5 million in 2010 as many factories were running in losses.

Khurshid Alam added, “You can see that around 0.2 million people previously associated with the leather sector have now lost jobs. Together with the persistent energy crisis, the prices of our raw material—the cow and goat skins—have also gone up unprecedentedly since 2006. This sums up the ailment of the leather sector and if export/smuggling of animals, hides and skins does not stop immediately, many of our units will inevitably close down for good.”

(09 July 2011 From Pak Tribune)

Chopping of mangroves

Political influence bars police to take action against mafia

KARACHI: The police refused to take any action against the politically influential mafia that had been mercilessly chopping mangroves at coastal areas of the city, said Mohammed Ali Shah, Chairperson Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF), while talking to Daily Times on Sunday.

Shah said lack of a single authority and uniform legislation were core obstacles in addressing the issue, as multiple agencies had control of mangrove forest, including Port Qasim Authority, Karachi Port Trust, Defence Housing Authority and Sindh Forest Department. They all put responsibility of safeguarding of mangroves on others, which was why the practice had not come to a halt, he added.

Shah informed that the mangroves acted as physical breeding grounds and nurseries for fish, shrimp and crabs, they also provided natural shield against cyclones, hurricanes and tsunamis. The illegal choppers of mangroves put Karachi at a high risk of facing effects of cyclone and tsunamis, he warned.

The practice was being carried out on the name of urban development through reclamation of coastal land since incumbent government was not interested to curb it, Shah said. He claimed an influential land mafia had been cutting mangroves in order to sell the reclaimed land without any fear of police action against its illegal activities.

Shah regretted that the mafia had earned a lot of money by selling coastal land and now it was grabbing land at the cost of mangroves forest. Besides, the use of mangroves wood had been increasing particularly for burners of factories of Korangi industrial area, he added.

Shah maintained that the United Nations had declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests Conservation and the Pakistan government had endorsed it, while Sindh Forest Department had declared the mangroves of Karachi as protected.

PFF Chairperson stated that hundreds of thousand of people directly or indirectly depended on the mangrove ecosystem for

living and for centuries communities used mangroves as a fuel wood and fodder for their animals. Over the last five decades, mangrove forests had been subjected to over exploitation, he added.

Shah said that in 1986, the dense, normal and sparse vegetation were spread over on an area of 440,000 hectares, which was reduced to 160,000 hectares in 1992 and by 2005



to only 86,000 hectares.

Timber mafia in connivance with some government officials had been rapidly stripping the mangrove cover, he charged.

Commenting about the destruction of mangrove forests in the Baba Bhit Island area, he said big wood warehouses had been set up in Machchar Colony from where people had been coming in boats daily to cut trees.

Shah said government should make law to prohibit any construction, urbanisation and development beyond 500 metres from beach to land and it should form a mangroves protection committee, comprising all stakeholders including representatives of fishing communities.

Responding to a question on raising the voice against the mafia, **Shah said the fishing community invited Mafia's wrath by** doing so as two office-bearers of PFF had been killed by it, while the killers were still at large.

(By Haris Hanif 11 July 2011 From Daily Times)

Afghanistan Bright Spot: Wildlife Surviving in War Zones

First survey in decades reveals surprising number of bears, porcupines.

Despite decades of deadly fighting among humans, many of Afghanistan's mammals are doing surprisingly well in the country's remaining forests, according to a new study.

Recent biological surveys in the remote and war-torn Nuristan Province, which lies along Afghanistan's eastern border with Pakistan, have revealed sightings and other strong evidence of several species, including Asiatic black bears, gray wolves, and leopard cats.

Scientists weren't sure that these species had survived in Afghanistan since the last surveys of the region in the 1970s.

"It's great news to learn that these animals are still here," said Peter Zahler, who launched the Wildlife Conservation Society's Afghanistan program in 2006.

Bears, Leopard Cats, and More

Between 2006 and 2009, teams spotted the species via camera traps, studied DNA evidence left behind in droppings, and looked for animals during transect surveys through the country's last forest ecosystems. (See pictures: "'Lost' Deer, Rare Cuckoo Caught in Camera Traps.")

For example, in the case of the black bear, scientists took 45 photographs—as well as 5 camera-trap pictures—observed 18 individuals, and collected 16 scat samples over the study period. The leopard cat was more elusive, with only three individuals photographed and very few caught via camera traps. The most commonly recorded species was the Indian crested porcupine, with either direct or indirect evidence of more than 280 individuals over the study period. Also oft-observed were the red fox, the grey wolf, and the golden jackal. **Other species detected included rhesus macaques, yellow-throated martens, and even a few domestic cats.**

Unexpectedly, the scientists also saw a few common palm civets, catlike mammals that had never before been documented in Afghanistan. The rugged forests of Nuristan are probably the most biologically diverse part of Afghanistan, in part because Indian Ocean monsoons bring moisture that's lacking in many other areas of the country, noted Zahler, who was not directly part of the study team.

Afghanistan Animals Not Out of the Woods

But the good news comes with several caveats.

For example, satellite studies show that Nuristan's forest cover has been greatly reduced during the past two decades, and it's still disappearing today.

"If this continues, I think we'll see the last of the larger animals disappear from the area," Zahler said. "We were delighted that there is wildlife here, but its long-term survival is still very much in question."

Some deforestation is the result of people cutting trees for fuel or building materials, but the bulk of forest loss is driven by timber industries, which are able to operate with little oversight or regulation in the politically unstable region, Zahler said.

The violence has "created a lack of management," he said. "It's not complete lawlessness, but a lot of cultural institutions have been degraded to the point where it's more of a free-for-all—which I think has greatly accelerated the drain on natural resources."

And when local people sell timber rights for a pittance, Zahler added, it's not only animals that suffer—people also lose precious resources.

"With the forest clear-cut, they lose the ability to build houses and find firewood in the winter. They lose mushrooms and pine nuts and everything that they depend on for local sale and for food," he explained.

"The communities understand this and want help with the sustainable management of these forest resources, and we've made some inroads in Nuristan communities [to] help them manage these resources, on which they are directly dependent."



Afghanistan Bright Spot: Wildlife Surviving in War Zones

Continued...

he Wildlife Conservation Society's Zahler agreed that keeping Afghanistan's wildlife safe is an important way to help keep the peace.

"It's not just about bears and leopards—it's about natural resources that people depend on, and wildlife is just an example. Losing those resources means that communities are going to fall apart, because they won't be able to support themselves.

"So helping them manage those resources is an important part of maintaining stability and security in a country like Afghanistan."

(12 July 2011 From *National Geographic*)

Skeleton on the wall: Blue whale comes to the jungle

A 90-foot skeleton of a blue whale is being placed on the exterior wall of the Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH). Narrating the story of the **world's largest mammal's journey in Pakistan**, director of museum, Dr Muhammad Rafiq told *The Express Tribune* that a blue whale appeared at the Karachi port in 1970 and could not be returned to the sea due to its weight.

The local fishermen buried the whale near the port. Later, the authorities at PMNH were able to get hold of its skeleton, which was shifted to Islamabad. Rafiq said the whale would be placed on the wall within the next 10 days. He explained that a total of Rs1.5 million has been spent on the project, and the skeleton has been **treated with "special chemicals" to protect it from unfavourable weather.**

A museum official said they have prepared a "comprehensive strategy" to preserve and protect the natural history of Pakistan and the museum is fulfilling its duties with full dedication and integrity.

PMNH, which falls under the Pakistan Science Foundation, was

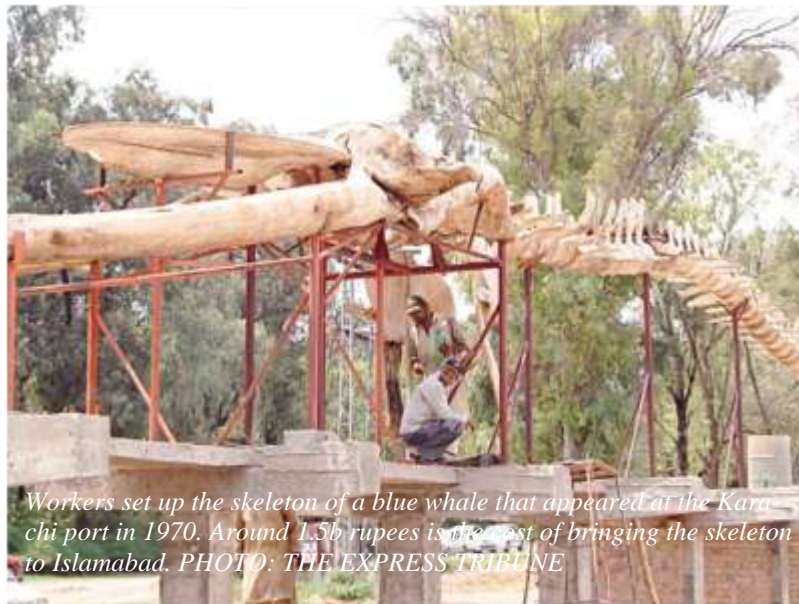
established in 1979 in Islamabad. The museum's building was established in 1995 on Garden Avenue, Shakarparian, where several renowned scientists, geologists, botanists and zoologists are engaged in various activities, such as providing relevant and useful information to young students.

The museum aims to illustrate the natural history of Pakistan, and carry out research and investigations in the fields of botany, zoology, mountains and minerals studies. Apart from that, it is making efficient use of **the country's natural resources**, provision of facilities to local and foreign researchers to carry out productive studies and presenting the natural history of Pakistan in an attractive way to increase the knowledge

of common people, he added.

The museum consists of almost 40 scientists and designers who have carried out extensive research in their respective fields of specialisation. There are more than 600,000 historical models in the museum. The scientist and zoologists have also discovered several new species of plants and animals as well. Apart from that, more than 450 research papers at PMNH have been published by local and foreign publishers.

(By Zulfiqar Baig 13 July 2011 From *Express Tribune*)



Workers set up the skeleton of a blue whale that appeared at the Karachi port in 1970. Around 1.5b rupees is the cost of bringing the skeleton to Islamabad. PHOTO: THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

Meat prices go up in Pindi, Islamabad

RAWALPINDI, July 12: The meat prices have increased in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and butchers fear that it will further go up in Ramazan.

Butchers are selling mutton at Rs500-Rs540 per kg and beef at Rs320-Rs340 per kg in different markets of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The mutton was being sold at Rs450 and beef at Rs250 per kg a month ago.

The official price of mutton is Rs370 per kg and beef is Rs200 per kg in Rawalpindi.

Talking to Dawn, the butchers, however, feared the prices of meat would further escalate in coming days. They said that the price of mutton would reach to Rs600 per kg next month. People expressed resentments over the increase in prices of **meat and urged the government to rein in price hike. "Mutton and beef have become precious items for the salaried class as we unable to afford it," said Tanveer Manzoor, a resident of Mohanpura.**

He said that the people were already facing problems in managing their kitchen budgets and the latest increase in the meat prices has forced them to avoid it. He said that people had now turned to vegetables.

Naseem Minhas, a resident of Chur Chowk, said that the government was not taking the matter seriously as unbridled price hike of edibles had made the lives of people miserable. He said that the use of meat would be increased in Ramazan and the government should control the prices.

All Pakistan Jamiatul Quresh Meat Welfare Association president Khurshid Ahmed Quershi said that due to shortage of animals in the market, the butchers increased the price of mutton and beef in the local market.

"The export of animal to Afghanistan and Arab countries was the main reason of shortage of animal in the market," he said adding the situation would get worse if the government did not take preventive measure to save this sector.

"A total 5,000 animals are slaughtered daily in the twin cities to meet the demand of the residents," he said.

Last year, the butchers slaughtered 8,000 animals on daily basis in the twin cities but due to shortage of animals, the number has been reduced, he said.

He urged the government to import cows, buffaloes, goats from neighbouring countries like India. During the tenure of former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, the government imported the cattle from India and it would help the market to bring down the prices, the association president said.

District Officer (Enterprises) and Price Magistrate Saeed Toor **told Dawn, "The CDGR has issued official price list and it will ensure that the mutton is sold at Rs370 per kg and beef at Rs200 per kg."**

The district government would soon launch a campaign against butchers and other shopkeepers who found violating the official price list.

He said that on the directive of the Punjab government, the CDGR had launched anti-adulteration drive in the district.

The district health department in anti-adulteration drive in the city on Monday imposed fine of Rs20,000 on 11 shopkeepers while destroying 80 kg of unhygienic sweets. The health department team led by District Health Officer (Urban areas) Dr Ansar Ishaq accompanied by Food Inspectors Malik Usman and Tanveer Butt conducted a raid on confectionery shops, bakeries, restaurants and milk shops in different parts of the city.

(By Aamir Yasin 13 July 2011 From Down.com)

Elusive Snow Leopards Thrive in Surprising Spot

Even big cats like a good scratch: A wild snow leopard in Afghanistan. Credit: Wildlife Conservation Society.

Thanks to the vigilant eye of camera traps stationed high in Afghanistan's remote northeast mountains, researchers have uncovered exciting news: A population of endangered snow leopards, one of the most elusive big cats on the planet, is thriving in the region.



The big cats live among the dramatic peaks of the desolate Wakhan Corridor, a narrow strip of land 220 miles (354 kilometers) long, and sandwiched between Tajikistan to the north, Pakistan to the south, and a tiny border with China to the east. 10 Stocks to Hold Forever
Buy them, forget about them, and never sell them.



Latest Penny Stock Alerts www.pennystockalley.com

Our Penny Alerts Keep You Ahead. Essential Info - No Spam.
Join Now!

Best Penny Stock Picks www.OxOfWallstreet.com

Get the edge you need. Free Email Sign Up. No Spam.

Snow leopard close-up. Credit: Wildlife Conservation Society. Camera traps captured shots of the spotted cats at 16 different locations across the region, the first time the technology has been used in Afghanistan to document the rare animals.

"This is a wonderful discovery; it shows that there is real hope for snow leopards in Afghanistan," said Peter Zahler, deputy director for Asia Programs at the Wildlife Conservation Society, in a statement.

Snow leopards' spotted coats help them blend in surprisingly well among the rocky terrain they call home.

Credit: Wildlife Conservation Society.

Although snow leopards once roamed many of Central



Asia's mountain regions, the species has suffered declines as high as 20 percent in the last 16 years. Researchers with the Wildlife Conservation Society, the organization that conducted the camera trap studies, say a mere 4,500 to 7,500 snow leopards still wander in the wild.

"Now our goal is to ensure that these magnificent animals have a secure future as a key part of Afghanistan's natural heritage," Zahler said.

A Wildlife Conservation Society study examining the plight of snow leopards in Afghanistan — the species is threatened by poaching, the illegal pet trade and run-ins with angry shepherds who don't appreciate the cats eating their charges — was published in the June 29 issue of the *Journal of Environmental Studies*.

(By Our Amazing Plant Staff on 14 July 2011)

Environment preservation: Global climate change deepens national water pool worry

Experts at a seminar Thursday expressed concern over the impact of climate change on Pakistan in case the government fails to take effective measures.

The seminar **“National Climate Change Policy”** was arranged by Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Provincial Environment Agency and was

attended by professors from different Universities of K-P and experts from forest, agriculture, irrigation and disaster management departments.

University of Agriculture Peshawar (UAP) Water Management

Chairperson Dr Muhammad Jamal Khan said, “We should preserve our underground water reservoir because they are decreasing rapidly and unless we take practical steps to monitor the situation we would be facing a severe water shortage in the future.”

He informed the audience that the underground water level in Quetta has decreased from six to fifteen feet; Abbottabad and southern districts of K-P are facing a similar situation.

“The reduction of water level will also affect the power generation capacity, especially in K-P, where we can generate more than 40,000 MW of electricity using Hydel power,” Dr Jamal added.

Project Director Agriculture department Dr Muhammad Rasool

said residential colonies should not be built on agricultural land. The government, therefore, needs to include relevant



protective measures in its agenda to spread awareness, he added. The participants also expressed concern over deforestation in the province and demanded a stop to the illegal cutting of forests in different parts of K-P. Professor Ifkhtiar Khan from UAP urged the government to focus on building water

reservoirs and conserve flood water to use for agriculture purposes and power generation.

Provincial Minister for Environment and Forest Wajid Ali Khan welcomed the suggestions and assured the participants that the government will inculcate them in the National Climate Policy. He added forestation should be encouraged in other parts of the country along with K-P and Kashmir.

Talking about the national climate policy, Wajid Ali Khan said federal government has consulted the provincial governments and the final policy draft will be tabled before the Federal Cabinet for final approval.

(By Islamuddin Sajid on 15 July 2011 From the Express Tribune)

Poultry meat rates shoot up

KARACHI: After opening of markets on Friday and rising demand traders fully cashed the situation by pushing up the rate of poultry meat to Rs300 per kg from Rs282 per kg two days

per kg. Dealers linked the red meat price hike to surging export of meat and live animals as well as smuggling. In July-May 2010-11 meat exports had risen to \$138 million

(47,264 tons) as compared to \$89 million (32,298 tons) in the same period of last fiscal year.

Many sports personalities and celebrities have entered in local meat business and export and animal farms as meat is fetching good price in world markets.

There is a gap of Rs6 per kg in poultry live bird price issued by Sindh Poultry Wholesalers and Retailers Association (SPWRA) and Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA). Previously PPA rates used to be cheaper by Rs2 per kg than the SPWRA. However, SPWRA has always claimed that their



A poultry trader arranging the poultry meat on his stall while engaging himself into a mobile phone conversation. - File Photo

back. Live bird rate has swelled to Rs176 from Rs166 per kg as people thronged in large numbers to buy meat for making various dishes for Shab-e-Barat, besides the marriage season, which is in full swing.

In January this year, poultry live bird and its meat prices were Rs130 per kg and Rs210-230 per kg.

The government, engaged in serious political issues, is not bothered to take notice of the price hike by the market forces on the demand and supply gap. Another main reason of people shifting towards white meat is the meteoric surge in beef and mutton prices. By February this year, the highest price of mutton ranged between Rs500-520 per kg.

Traders are now charging Rs550-600 per kg depending on the quality of meat and areas.

Similarly, some meat dealers are demanding Rs350-380 for beef meat (bachia without bones) while in many markets it is being sold at Rs340 per kg..

The rate for beef with bones rate is tagged between Rs280-300

rates are followed in the markets.

SPRWA general secretary Kamal Akhtar Siddiqui said people were buying poultry despite its higher rates since it is still cheaper than mutton and beef without bones.

He said low production of birds at the farms in summer season had created a big gap in supply and demand ahead of Shab-e-Barat. Despite persistent increase in prices around 400,000 poultry birds are being slaughtered daily in the city. When live bird and its meat prices decline the daily demand reaches up to 450,000-500,000 birds.

A large number of poultry shopkeepers continue to make consumers fool by claiming that they were selling the bird and its meat at wholesale rates, but actually they dip the bird in the water for few minutes after slaughtering, which enhances the meat weight by 60-70 grams.

(16 July 2011 From Down.com)

Morning raid rescues 150 animals from Old Delhi

NEW DELHI: Over 150 animals were rescued in a raid conducted in the Jama Masjid area in the wee hours of Sunday. In all, 55 rabbits, 42 rare lata pigeons, five ducks, five fighter cocks and 30-odd exotic birds of the budgriger variety were



found squashed in tiny cages and were allegedly being sold by one Irfan to another person who managed to flee.

A team of police and wildlife activists raided the area around 6.20am and managed to arrest Irfan, slapping a case under Sections 39, 50 and 51 of the Wildlife Protection Act (1972) against him. The police are looking for the buyer, who has been identified, and some others involved in this smuggling racket.

"We received a tip-off that such a deal would be struck in the area early on Sunday morning and notified the police. On reaching the spot, Irfan was caught with the animals. We have also named the receiver, who is absconding, in the FIR. Such smuggling rackets are on the rise and Jama Masjid has become a hot spot of such activities in the recent past," said Saurabh Gupta, a wildlife activist accompanying the police team. According to activists, smugglers usually breed these animals in several UP districts like Bijnaur, Rampur, Bareilly and Muradabad. These animals are then brought to Jama Masjid and further smuggled to Pakistan and Arab countries.

(By Indrani Basu 17 July 2011 From The Times of India)

Award of livestock project to NGO questioned

ISLAMABAD, July 16: Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has raised questions over the award of 'Prime Minister's Special Initiative for Livestock' project to an NGO in 2006 by the Shaukat Aziz government.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council had approved the project worth Rs1.69 billion and awarded to the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), a non governmental organization, allegedly in violation of rules. According to RSPN's website, the initiative was aimed at enhancing livestock productivity and creation of rural livestock assets.

The AGP in its report observed: "The Planning Commission after the technical evaluation, back in 2006, had asserted in its official communication that the sponsors [federal government] should explain why activities of the project could not be implemented through existing livestock departments of provinces, AJK and Northern Areas."

The AGP objections have remained unaddressed for the last three years despite repeated reminders to the government. The departmental audit committee has suggested that the matter should be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

The report, made available to Dawn, revealed that the officials of Auditor General of Pakistan were now pressing the federal authorities to initiate a 'high level' investigation **into the matter to "fix responsibility and recover the state money". The report said that the contract was awarded to RSPN without evaluating its expertise in the field of livestock.**

In fact, the report said, the NGO had to initiate one-month training programme for its personnel in veterinary services, ignoring the existing trained field staff of the government. **"The existing field staff of the government having two years diploma were ignored and instead under this project the NGO started one month training for its personnel,"** says one of the documents.

Continued...

A senior government official, who has previously worked with the Ministry of Livestock and Dairy Development, said officials of both Punjab and AJK, felt that livestock related services were available in the province and the state and that the existing departments should be strengthened rather than creating new ones.

The official also said that the Planning Commission had **reservations: “The Planning Commission representative stated** that the NGO specific PC-I was unique and that it was approved at the highest level by assigning the project to an NGO ‘without observing transparency’.

The official claimed that even during the drafting of the contract between the government and the NGO the law division was bypassed, which was also a violation of government rules.

According to Rules of Business 1973, “it is mandatory that Law and Justice Division shall be consulted on all legal questions arising out of any case on distribution of business among divisions.” This is why, said the official, the AGP officials declared the agreement invalid.

When approached, the chief operating officer of RSPN, **Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay, said: “The project is not running any more and the [government’s] report is not fair besides we were only issued Rs837 million not Rs1.69 billion.”**

“All the pre-requisites of the federal government for awarding the said project to RSPN were followed and it was even approved by Ecnec and Central Development Working Party (CDWP) so there was no flaw in awarding of the contract,” asserted Mr Tetlay. The government system was followed, he said, besides the project proved beneficial one for the people. **The RSPN official said that “government can’t go to door to door for meeting the challenging task of livestock and dairy development so a second party [RSPN] was involved and we were present in 84 districts and we did it well.”**

He maintained that even a third party audit of the project was conducted by multinational management consulting company in 2009 and as per the audit report people benefited from our project and earned profit.

“Few of them [farmers] said that their animals remained fit during all the season and they benefited financially from it,” said Mr Tetley. Most of the concerns of the government in this regard, he claimed, were just a talk and not in document form.

(By Imran Ali Teepu on 17 July 2011 From Down.com)

Vaneeza Footwear: The animal instinct

After venturing into lawn market, model-turned-entrepreneur Vaneeza Ahmed Ali launched her shoe collection. With most of the collection comprising of flats, she catered to a niche market with 30 designs, exhibited at her flagship store at Park Towers on July 18.

Featuring an animal theme with diamantes, Vaneeza Footwear was priced between Rs1,800 and Rs4,000. Though Ali had introduced four to five designs with her lawn collection, this was the first formal launch of her footwear collection.

Talking to The Express Tribune, Ali said: “I wanted to do something different. There are plenty of nice shoes in the market, but what they all lack is comfort. My priority is to give comfort to my customer.”

“I have used Italian and German leather in most of these handmade flats — they are comfortable and wearable. It is just a few designs that I did with rexine, the others are in pure leather,” she added.

Sharing more details about the animal theme, Ali said:

“Nobody else was doing it. In diamantes there were flowers all around, all kinds of flowers. We went according to the international fashion forecast where one sees animal prints, animal motifs and animal shoes all beginning from the New York Fashion Week, hence the inspiration.”The designs feature owls, dragons, leopards, seahorses, fishes and peacocks. The colours ranged from primarily black, deep gold and shimmering silver.

“You will soon see that these designs will all be copied and will be available at various other shoes stores,” said Ali.

While Ali is designing and marketing the shoes, her partners are primarily involved in manufacturing and retailing. However, considering the state of business in Karachi being affected by **security threats, Ali plans “to shift her business either to Lahore or Sialkot. Avenues abroad are options which are even available, but as far as my business is concerned, this is not an option I would go for”.**With 30 designs already out, Ali plans to introduce more during Ramazan: **“The eid collection will be value-added with more stones and the collection will comprise of formal shoes, not funky ones. Hopefully, it will be out in mid-August.”**

Continued...

Around the same time, Ali plans to take her collection to Lahore, Islamabad and Faisalabad. Further extending her



Both collections showcased animal-inspired designs.

brand, Ali is also considering launching a men's footwear collection. While Ali has launched "animal shoes", Anoushey Ashraf, Natasha Qizilbash and Alizeh Ashraf are back with their animal-themed tees. The trio launched 350 designs as part of their Summer Autumn collection at The Forum on July 18. With the animal theme being a predominant factor in the collection, Qizilbash said, "Previously we have done a theme-based venture on t-shirts depicting owls. Next, we tried our hands at cats. This time, we have Mickey Mouse, the cartoon character, and in animals we have roosters and dogs." "People often say that they don't wear them, but this is what sells the most. People are making statements with animals and hence, it sells the most," said Anoushey. With blacks, whites and some neutral colours, the collection also features floral prints and stripes and prices range from Rs1,200 to Rs4,000.

This was Block Seven's third exhibition in Karachi and the fifth in Pakistan. However, like Ali, the trio is looking forward to launching their flagship store. "Now, I believe we will be opening a store soon. We have experimented a lot with exhibitions; we need to take a step forward," said Anoushey.

(By Sadia Qamar 19 July 2011)

Former govt ruined Murree's beauty

LAHORE - Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif gave a detailed briefing to PML-N chief Muhammad Nawaz Sharif about the revival of natural beauty of Murree, provision of civic and tourist facilities and ongoing development projects at a meeting in the hill station Tuesday.

Steering Committee Chairman Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Adviser to CM Raja Ashfaq Sarwar, Rawalpindi commissioner, Environment secretary, Wildlife DG, PHA director general and high-ups of departments concerned were present.

Nawaz Sharif said the previous government ruined the natural beauty of tourist spots in Murree and paid no attention to its development.

He commended Shahbaz Sharif's efforts for provision of tourist facilities, restoration of scenic beauty and ongoing projects of public welfare in Murree.

Shahbaz Sharif said public betterment and early completion of development schemes in Murree like other parts of the province



was his top priority. He added that natural environment and beauty of the tourist spot was destroyed by illegal

constructions in the former regime. He added that multi-storey buildings of plazas and hotels were constructed haphazardly while illegal constructions were permitted for minting money. He observed that the former government did not heed to the maintenance of roads, improvement of parks, provision of tourist facilities and other projects for beautification of Murree executed by the PML-N in its previous tenure due to which the roads and parks of the hill station suffered heavy damage.

Continued...

“Those responsible for destroying the natural beauty will be taken to task,” he promised.

Shahbaz Sharif mentioned that repair and reconstruction of nine important roads of Murree had been completed while **Old Murree Road from Satrameel had also been repaired. “A weighbridge will be constructed at Satrameel on Old Murree Road for weighing load on trucks,” he said.**

The chief minister directed that the steering committee be set up on development projects in Murree to search new parking places to attract tourist.

The CM said long-term planning would be made for the provision of tourist and civic amenities in the area and the master plan in this regard would be finalised soon. He said a consolidated mechanism would also be evolved for solid waste management and cleanliness. He directed the tehsil administration and other departments concerned to ensure cleanliness within a week.

(By Nawaz 20 July 2011 From The Nation)

More than 30 scientists of Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) are engaged in educating the nature lovers

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.

(On 21 July 2011 From Pakistan Observer)

Policy to set up forest university in KP

PESHAWAR: Minister for Environment Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Wajid Ali Khan has said that after devolution of Pakistan Forest Institute to provinces in the wake of 18th amendment, provincial government was making policy to upgrade it to a degree awarding institute besides setting up Forest University in the province. The step was taken to boost research culture on issues related to environment, wildlife and forests. He expressed these views while addressing a meeting here at University of Peshawar on Thursday.

VC UoP Prof. Dr. Azmat Hayat, DG Pakistan Forest Institute, Syed Bukhari Shah, dean Faculty of Numerical Sciences Prof. Dr. Muhammad Riaz Khan and other high officials of the concerned departments were present on the occasion. The Provincial Minister said that Pakistan Forest Institute was the second biggest institute that carried out research on forest related issues.

He said that University of Peshawar was precious and historical asset of the province adding that the standard of research and education should be further improved. Moreover, he added that Peshawar University had its branches across the province with a view to provide education to students at their doorsteps. The VC said that Pakistan Forest Institute should be handed over to Peshawar University to start M Phil and Ph.D programs **“We offer training courses in animal and plant collection, preservation and curation. Special courses in animal taxonomy 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.

(By M.A Zuberi On 21 July 2011 From Business Recorder)

Hunting in G-B puts animals in danger

People from Azad Jammu and Kashmir enter Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and hunt threatened animals. They smuggle highly valuable herbal and medicinal plants outside of G-B, Abdul Hameed, a Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmaker told the house on Friday.

He added that residents of Astore Valley had approached him with the complaint that illegal chopping of forests is also on the rise while relevant officials remained indifferent to the situation. Chief Minister (CM) Mehdi Shah taking notice of the complaint summoned Secretary Forest in his office. He also announced the release of Rs200 million for clearance of school dues for children hailing from Attabad who are studying all across Pakistan. In wake of the tragedy in Attabad, the government had announced free of charge education to the people affected by the calamity in early 2010. This issue was highlighted by another lawmaker Mutabiat Shah.

Responding to questions raised by various lawmakers during the fifteenth session of G-B legislative assembly on Friday, the CM informed them that the federal government had increased the wheat quota of wheat for G-B, and the region will receive 500 more bags of wheat in the future. He added that G-B airports would be improved so they can function in different climatic conditions. The CM said that Gilgit and Skardu will be declared big cities soon.

Baig, addressing the treasury benches, said that China had upheld the honour of the government by providing relief to the people affected by calamities during the hour of need. Although he said the relief had now exhausted and therefore they should ask China for more assistance.

(By Shabir Mir On 23 July 2011 From The International News)

Wildlife researcher faces allegations

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — A federal wildlife biologist whose observation that polar bears likely drowned in the Arctic helped galvanize the global warming movement seven years ago was placed on administrative leave as officials investigate scientific misconduct allegations.

Although it wasn't clear what the exact allegations are, a government watchdog group representing Anchorage-based scientist Charles Monnett said investigators have focused on his 2006 journal article about the bears that garnered worldwide attention.

The group, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, filed a complaint on Monnett's behalf Thursday.

(On 29 July 2011)

5,000 die of rabies every year in Pakistan: experts

LAHORE: The incidents of rabies' are increasing in Pakistan where 5,000 deaths are recorded annually while rabies cases reported from India are much higher and one person is becoming prey to the zoonotic viral disease after every 20 minutes.

This was stated by speakers at a national seminar titled "The awareness and current status of rabies" organised by University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) in collaboration with World Health Organisation (WHO) on Thursday.

Punjab Livestock and Dairy Development Department Secretary Hamid Yaqoob Sheikh stressed that the health and livestock departments in collaboration with universities should make collaborative efforts to fight against rabies. He said that these institutions should also play their role in creating awareness and preventing the disease in the first place.

Referring to nation's efforts during natural calamities, Sheikh asked why such collaborative efforts were not made during normal circumstances. He also urged the experts to identify the causes and reasons of the spread of rabies, its prevention and cure. He lauded the university's efforts in holding the national seminar to create awareness among general public.

UVAS Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz said rabies was a fatal disease and an alarming threat for human life as well as animals. He called for chalking out strategies to create awareness among students, livestock workers and general public to control the disease. He said that World Rabies Day would be observed on September 28. Dr Nawaz said that rabies was described in Chinese history around 556 BC.

Epidemiology and Public Health Department Chairman Prof Dr Ather Khan said that around 55,000 deaths were being reported from across the globe due to zoonotic viral disease and added that 56 percent of these deaths were occurring in Asia and 44 percent in Africa, particularly in rural areas. He said that the domestic animals – dogs, cats and horses were the most important vectors for the spread and transmission of rabies. He called for immunisation of domestic animals and stressed that in case of a bite from rabid animals, the post exposure immunisation must be carried out.

Later, at the technical session, the experts recommended that veterinarians and MBBS doctors must be provided with SOPs to attend rabies cases. It was suggested that surveillance was essential for detection of high-risk areas, outbreaks and monitoring of the use of vaccine. Measures should be adopted to control the stray dog population through spaying.

(On 29 July 2011 From Daily Times)



Smallholders helped back on their feet - but further support needed

The floods that struck Pakistan starting in July 2010 represented one of the most devastating natural disasters of our times, submerging almost one-fifth of the country - an area the size of Greece - killing 2000 people, affecting 20 million and destroying 1.6 million homes.

Damage to agriculture - the basic livelihood for 80 percent of the affected population - was estimated at more than \$5.1 billion, including the loss of over two million hectares of crops. The devastated area included the breadbasket province of Punjab and much of Pakistan's most fertile land.

The disaster struck at a crucial point in the agricultural calendar-- just before the harvest of spring-planted crops and within weeks of the critical winter wheat planting season. Livestock surviving the floodwaters lacked feed, veterinary support and shelter. With existing and future sources of food and income washed away, humanitarian aides raced against time to prevent a domino effect.

Funded by \$92 million of donations, FAO's efforts focused as a matter of priority on winter planting of wheat and vegetables and on spring planting of maize and rice as well as vegetables. Support was provided to preserve vital livestock resources and on-farm irrigation systems were repaired.

Almost half a million households were provided with wheat and vegetable crop packages. They yielded 650 000 tonnes of wheat - twice as much as traditional seeds and enough to feed more than four million people for at least six months. In addition, the average family sold almost a third of their harvest, generating \$116 of cash income.

From the onset of the floods, more than 200 organizations joined efforts through the Agriculture Cluster, led by FAO, to respond to immediate and critical challenges with the support of the donor community.

Livestock support



Over 290 000 families received support from FAO for their livestock - an area in which women play a crucial role.

This helped to keep over one million animals alive and healthy during the

2010/2011 winter until green fodder became available.

Farming families are benefiting from repaired and cleaned on-farm irrigation channels from over 1 000 cash-for-work schemes. This was vital for the winter wheat crop, as well as for crops planted in the spring, particularly rice.

Despite the above successes, much remains to be done to further restore rural livelihoods.

(On 29 July 2011 From IIFL)

Governor for overcoming environmental pollution

LAHORE – Punjab Governor Sardar Latif Khan Khosa has stressed upon the world community to evolve a comprehensive strategy for overcoming the menace of environmental pollution.

Addressing a seminar organised by Pakistan Engineering Congress on “Changing Environment Pattern and its Impact with Focus on Pakistan” here at a local hotel on Wednesday, the governor said that besides facilitating the humanity, the inventions were also proving hazardous in the shape of environmental degradation.

Latif Khosa said that the menace was not relating to a specific part of the world and it had global impacts. He said global warming had badly affected this part of the region especially Pakistan. Global warming, he said, has made a negative impact on agriculture by reducing yield. He said that the menace has



also damaged forestry, wild life, livestock and fish farming in the country.

He suggested the world powers to join hands and take radical measures for improving the environment. He also urged the media to play its due role in raising public awareness about environmental issues. He asked engineers to guide the government functionaries for curbing the menace of pollution. President PEC Engr Husnain Ahmad and other experts also addressed the participants

(On 30 July 2011 From The Nation)

Man's Best Friend

In the two months since the SEAL raid on Osama bin Laden's compound in Pakistan and it was revealed that a military dog accompanied the team, much attention has been given to the highly-trained dogs that accompany soldiers in the field. General Petraeus, the commander of US forces in Afghanistan, favors the use of dogs: "The capability they [the dogs] bring to the fight cannot be replicated by man or machine," he says, reported ABC. "By all measures of performance, their yield outperforms any asset we have in our industry. Our Army would be remiss if we failed to invest more in this incredibly valuable resource." The canine soldiers have become so popular there is even a "War Dog of the Week" page at foreignpolicy.com.



But pets on the battlefield are nothing new. The *New York Times* has a piece online about the animal mascots of the American Civil War: As Union and Confederate soldiers left the comforts of home for the grim realities of war, many brought along family pets or adopted stray or wild animals, which quickly took on semi-official roles. Regiments from the North and the South kept dogs, cats, horses, squirrels and raccoons as mascots. Some chose more unusual animals, including bears, badgers, eagles, wildcats, even a camel. Not only did these mascots provide comfort and entertainment to lonely and bored soldiers in camp and on marches, but they often became companions in battle, suffering alongside their regiments.

(• By EMILY SCHULTHEIS On 30 July 2011 From The Weekly Standard)

Ban on animal export hailed

KARACHI (PPI): Khurshid Alam, Chairman, Pakistan Tanners' Association hailed the decision of government of imposing complete ban on export of live animals from Pakistan, which was demanded persistently by PTA. Khurshid Alam in a statement on Friday said that ban on export of live animals from Pakistan would certainly bring positive impact specially to reduce the meat prices in Pakistan, which is already at exorbitant extent for the people in general as well as to avert the serious scarcity being confronted by the leather industry for procuring the basic raw materials i.e. Hides & Skins.

The ban imposed by the government was the dire need of the Leather Industry to cater to the needs of basic raw materials (Hides & Skins) for PTA's country-wide members for meeting the export demands for timely execution of export orders, which were in jeopardy for cancellation for the lack



of this basic raw material.

Khurshid Alam also appealed to the government, Ministry of Commerce and other concerned Securities/Vigilance Agencies of the Government to take immediate stern action on smuggling of live animals from Pakistan, which are approximately being made 200,000 animals on monthly basis to Iran & Afghanistan, which is also one of the paths for increasing the meat prices in Pakistan and unavailability of sufficient quantity of hides & skins for meeting the domestic demand of Leather Industry.

ISLAMABAD, (SANA): The speakers at a seminar has stressed

(On 30 July 2011 From The Frontier Post)

Experts for coordinated efforts for enhancing forest cover to combat challenges, threats posed by climatic changes

the need for coordinated efforts for enhancing forest cover to combat challenges and threats posed by extreme climatic changes.

The seminar titled "Complaints and Readiness Mechanism for Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Pakistan: The Way Forward" was held in Islamabad today under the auspices of Sustainable Development Policy Institute.

The speakers said the extreme weather conditions are due to deforestation and desertification. They said without preserving forests the Carbon Dioxide level in the atmosphere can not be lowered and controlled. They said the forests are an important component of the economy of the country; therefore, they must



be preserved.

Those who spoke in the seminar include Associate Professor Norwegian University of Life Sciences Norway Ms. Ingrid Nyborg, Inspector General of Forests Syed Mahmood Nasir and Coordinator SDPI Faisal Nadeem.

(On 30 July 2011 From SANA)

Rs 250m being spent on tourist facilities

Lahore —To attract tourists from within as well as outside the province, the government will spend Rs 250 million on preservation, development and beautification of existing and potential tourist locations.

There are four ongoing programmes and six new ones to be accomplished in the current fiscal 2011-12. The four ongoing schemes will be completed at a cost of Rs 85 million while Rs 165 million would be spent on new schemes, official sources told APP on Friday.

They said the government was committed to making the sites a source of attraction for tourists as the sector had great potential. Some resorts lack basic facilities and keeping in view their interest, the tourism department with the assistance of forest and wildlife departments is preferring promotion of eco-tourism. **“With the allocated funds, animals and birds will be purchased for adding beauty to recreational parks and**



resorts,” sources added. Pakistan tourism has great potential despite poor law and order situation, tourists visit tourism sites in a big

number every year,” sources said. Under the strategy tourist facilities at Nankana and Derawer Fort Cholistan will be provided, besides renovation of Lal Sohanra Resort will also be made during 2011-12 while tourists facilities in Murree would be improved.

A new plan to develop Murree as a pollution-free tourism town will be given the final shape in the current financial year. During the year an under-construction bus terminal at Nankana Saheb will be completed. —APP

(On 30 July 2011 From Pakistan Observer)

Museum serves nature lovers with environmental education

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.

Continued...

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

(On 30 July 2011 From Pakistan Observer)

Fairbanks scientists plan to use drones to study wildlife

Could it be only a matter of time before wildlife biologists can do nearly all their work from behind a desk? Scientists at the University of Alaska Fairbanks are working in that direction. They've begun evaluating how unmanned aircraft -- what are commonly called drones -- can be used to monitor and track wildlife. The program is still in its infancy, and the Fairbanks Daily News Miner reports there are problems, most notably high costs and foul-weather limitations on flight.

But a 14-pound AeroVironment Puma AE, an unmanned aircraft usually used by the military for surveillance, has proven it can be flown from a fishing boat in the Bering Sea to monitor sea lion rookeries at low altitude without disturbing the animals. Researchers said the main problem with the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) came in bad weather.

"Its issue was wind sensitivity," Greg Walker told the

News-Miner. "It doesn't like to fly in gusty weather." You can watch the Puma AE in operation.

Federal biologists have so far taken the lead in using UAVs for wildlife research, but the aircraft would seem to have significant applicability for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game which



conducts aerial surveys of wildlife all across the state. Those surveys are costly to do with manned aircraft and potentially deadly.

Independent biologist Gordon Haber was conducting aerial observations of wolves in Denali National Park and Preserve two years ago when he died in a plane crash there.

Haber was a committed protector of Alaska wolves, but there are others in the state who have tried to limit the numbers of the wild canines to help caribou and moose, and they can't help but be tempted by the all-weather capabilities of armed drones such as those the U.S. has used to hunt terrorists with deadly efficiency in Pakistan.



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