

PAKISTAN WILDLIFE NEWS

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Pakistan Wildlife News

Issue XI, Volume 2

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INDIGENOUS FAUNA IN DANGER

The federal environment ministry has informed parliament that a number of indigenous fauna — the snow leopard, markhor, the Balochistan bear, houbara bustard and the Indus river dolphin among them — are listed as endangered species by international conservation bodies.

DAWNCOM

*Dawn Editorial
08 Nov. 2010*

The briefing came ostensibly with a view to emphasising the need to put in place additional conservation mechanisms and stricter vigilance and punitive measures to curb illegal hunting. Disturbingly enough, another report brought to light the gross violation of the ban imposed on hunting in Chitral district by none other than the president of a local village conservation committee.

The police reportedly recovered a number of markhor hides from the house of the violator before booking him.

Poaching is a multimillion-dollar illegal trade that goes on unabated in much of the developing world, with Africa, Asia and South America

being the main originating points.

Pakistan can learn a lesson from the strict conservation regime that India has implemented to curb illegal hunting and to save the environment.

Vigilant Indian authorities have not spared even the most popular of film celebrities in recent years when it has come to enforcing environmental and wildlife laws. A Bollywood superstar was restrained from cutting down a tree located within the walls of his house; another superstar was fined and imprisoned for shooting a deer.

In Pakistan, one has yet to hear of any such meaningful enforcement of the law where it does exist. Our municipal authorities routinely fell trees in the cities and execute development projects without the required environment impact assessment; in the countryside much of the hunting of endangered species is done by those who wield power and influence.

Implementation of a stricter vigilance and punitive regime is long overdue. It is needed urgently if we are to conserve a wide variety of indigenous flora and fauna.

Madagascan Tortoise Smuggler Nabbed at Thai Airport with Hundreds of Rare Reptiles



BANGKOK, October 11th, 2010) – Thailand’s Wildlife Crime Task Force arrested a foreign national attempting to smuggle 218 critically endangered Radiated and Ploughshare tortoises from Madagascar into Bangkok last night.

The Royal Thai Customs Investigation and Suppression Bureau and CITES Management Authority of Thailand arrested Mr. Basoiry Djamaidine, a Madagascan national, at Suvarnabhumi International Airport on October 10, 2010, after inspecting his baggage. Djamaidine was attempting to smuggle the protected tortoises in two large suitcases.

The tortoises were confiscated, with surviving animals relocated to the Department of National Park’s Bang Phra Wildlife Rescue Center in Chonburi Province. The total black market value of the seized wildlife is estimated by Thai authorities at around \$40,000.

This latest interdiction at Suvarnabhumi Airport comes just 12 days after the arrest of a Pakistani man and seizure of 1,140 rare star tortoises, which arrived on a Thai Airways flight from South Asia. It is the sixth arrest in the past seven weeks, as Thailand’s Wildlife Crime Task Force continues to crack down on foreign and local exotic animal smugglers and traders in a concerted effort to break international criminal syndicates using Thailand for their highly profitable, illicit and environmentally destructive trade.

“We commend Thai authorities and supporting NGOs on their continuing efforts to stamp out illegal wildlife trade. FREELAND is training authorities to detect and stop illegal trade in endangered species, but we’re also calling on everyone, including legislators and consumers,

to take responsibility for protecting our planet’s biodiversity. Consumer demand is the reason these tortoises have been smuggled more than 6,840km from Madagascar to Bangkok. If people don’t stop buying endangered animals as pets, many will be lost forever,” said FREELAND spokeswoman Bussara Tirakalyanapan.

With support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), FREELAND has launched airport and urban awareness campaigns in Bangkok to increase awareness and vigilance among all sections of society to stop illegal wildlife trade. Reaching almost 100,000 commuters daily during the past three months, FREELAND’s “Piece of Responsibility” campaign on Bangkok’s metro rail system highlights the role of consumers and the destructive impacts of poaching. It encourages people not to buy endangered species and to report wildlife crime. Long running banner, billboard and multimedia campaigns at Suvarnabhumi Airport also convey these messages to millions of travelers and ensure Customs and airport staff remain on the look out for protected species.

Madagascar’s Radiated Tortoise (*Astrochelys radiata*) and Ploughshare Tortoise (*Astrochelys yniphora*) are highly sought after by pet traders and collectors, who will pay thousands of dollars for a single tortoise. Both are listed under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), prohibiting their international commercial trade. Poaching is still occurring at unsustainable rates. These and many other unique and important species will be lost forever if the illegal wildlife trade continues.

Brick kilns smoke affecting air quality

INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

By Noor Aftab

ISLAMABAD: Hundreds of brick kilns emitting poisonous smoke due to burning of thousands metric tons of coal per month are adversely affecting the air quality in the twin cities, an official data revealed here on Sunday.

The official data available with the Ministry of Environment shows that nearly 38,000 metric tons of coal per month is burnt in twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi for brick production and the sulphurous smoke emitted by many primitive kilns surrounding the cities has become one of the major factors in degrading the quality of air. **A study on 'Environmental Geology of the Islamabad-Rawalpindi Areas' that was jointly conducted by Geological Survey of Pakistan and US Geological Survey still needs the attention of the authorities, who are directly responsible to protect and preserve the natural environment.**

The study involving years of hard work by experts shows that brick kilns are fired with coal trucked to the Islamabad-Rawalpindi area from Quetta. **"Each truck carries about 20 metric tons and 14-15 trucks are needed for each kiln to prepare about 275,000 bricks, or about 1 kilogram of coal per brick," it said.**

About clay-mining areas in or around Islamabad-Rawalpindi region the study states that there are 30 brick kilns in Chaklala, 45 in Tarnol, 8 in Chuhar Misrial, 5 in Karal, 100 in Taxila, 25 in Tanch Bhata, 8 in Khanna, 5 in Chakri, 13 in Lehtrar Bala Road, 20 in Gangal and 50 in Fatehjang.

In a much-applauded move Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) has recently demolished 27 brick kilns in Lohi Bher after their owner showed his willingness for this purpose to save natural environment.

But, unfortunately, there is still no effective system for regulating or leasing clay pits and brick kilns. Wherever the clay deposits are of sufficient thickness and quality, the owner of the land may dig a pit and construct a brick kiln. Each kiln and the surrounding clay pit occupy about 10,000 square meters; each operation has an average production life of about 10 years. Bricks are produced in cycles lasting about three months. About 30,000 bricks are produced in each run and about 12 million over the life of the pit.

Generally, two sizes of bricks are manufactured. For walls, the brick size is 22cm by 11cm, which weights about 2.5kg and for ceilings, the brick size is 15cm by 30cm, weighing about 3kg.

Given the environmental hazards due to traditional brick kiln industry it is necessary for concerned authorities to also observe functioning of two units based on third generation vertical shaft brick kiln technology (3G-VSBK). Established in Lohi Bher area with the help of Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation (SDC), these brick kilns can pave the way for introduction of new technology to reduce environmental hazards in the twin cities.

According to experts, the 3G-VSBK is a new Chinese brick manufacturing technology, combining with the energy efficient firing of the vertical kiln with the traditional slow cooling, which is most efficient and can potentially save a tremendous amount of coal if run in an optimal manner. These brick kilns emit a very low amount of smoke, as compared to traditional brick kilns.

The study also highlighted other major environmental concerns that included

environmental degradation from extraction and processing of building material, pollution of water by waste disposal, geological hazards and engineering characteristics of soil and rock.

More floods, droughts expected in Pakistan

Daily Times

Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

Staff Report

November 01, 2010

KARACHI: The time has come to reduce manmade temperatures by a significant level to combat global warming, which may cause more floods and droughts in Pakistan, advised environment experts and ministers.

While talking to Daily Times, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Pakistan Coordinator Nasir Panhwar said emission of greenhouse gases, rise in manmade temperatures including burning of fossil fuels and deforestation were major factors contributing to global warming.

The recent floods in Pakistan were due to global warming and change in extreme weather condition, he said, adding that global warming would cause more droughts and floods in the country in future.

Panhwar underscored the need to plant forests and to reduce manmade temperatures by a significant level to save the planet from natural disasters.

WWF official Saleem Shaikh said he strongly believed that global warming was likely to bring more floods and droughts in Pakistan. Deforestation, burning of fossil fuels, unplanned development in coastal areas and misuse of natural resources were some of the factors causing climate changes, he added.

The recent floods in the country caused massive devastation as over 1,900 people were killed, around 3,000 injured and over 21 million were affected while more than two million houses were damaged, he said.

The official informed that the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank have estimated that the floods inflicted \$9.5 billion losses to the

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Cont: More floods, droughts expected in Pakistan

economy. Environmentalists believe that the catastrophic floods were the result of global warming caused by human activities and the unchecked emissions of greenhouse gases, stated Shaikh.

He said the WWF Pakistan was conducting a detailed assessment to evaluate various ecological and environmental changes resulting from the floods.

“It is a good opportunity for the Sindh Forest Department to utilize all available resources in reviving forests by spreading seeds in inundated riverine areas before the floodwater recedes. Revival of riverine forests will have promising socio-economic and environmental impacts as these forests not only provide a sustainable source of fodder for the livestock but also help in improving climatic conditions,” he added.

According to a WWF report, over 99,711 acres of forestland in Punjab and 27,874 acres in Sindh have been cleared for non-forest uses while forest cover of over 4.242 million hectares in 1992, has declined to 3.44 million hectares.

The report claims that since 1947, over 61,330 hectares of forestland have been allocated for a number of non-forest uses, without arranging alternate land for reforestation. **“The forest conversion coupled with high deforestation rate is stripping Pakistan of its highly valuable natural resources,” it added.**

WWF Pakistan Keti Bandar site manager Hafeezullah said the melting of glaciers and global warming caused the floods in Pakistan. The visible signs of global warming could be witnessed in the Indus Delta and the Thatta coastal belt, where drought and sea intrusion have played havoc, he added.

The Badin, Thatta and Karachi coastal belts were also vulnerable to global warming, which would cause the seawater level to rise, he said, adding that the area residents would suffer colossal losses as about 90 percent of mangroves have been destroyed due to sea intrusion.

The experts further stressed to raise forests in every part of the world to

combat climate change. They said immediate measures were needed to stop deforestation in Pakistan.

Ali Gul, a government employee and social worker in Taluka Gambat, said that signs of global warming were evident in Khairpur District. There was a drought since 17 years in the katcha areas of Larkana and Khairpur districts before these floods, he said, adding that 90 percent of forest had dried up in both the districts.

Meanwhile, Adviser to Chief Minister on Information Sharmila Farooqi said that since 1900, the average global temperature has increased by 0.74°C. Humans were raising temperatures through unchecked actions including burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, while some natural factors also contribute to global warming **such as variations in the sun’s energy output and volcanic eruptions.**

“We will have to devise comprehensive action plans in collaboration with international organisations including WWF and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to combat global warming that may cause storms, droughts, floods, fires, food and water scarcity and loss of biodiversity,” Farooqi said.

She said the recent floods in Pakistan were the direct result of global warming and changes in extreme weather patterns. **“Everyone knows that climate change is a big issue but it is a matter of concern that we do not have solutions in our hands. We have to convert our industries to wind and solar power, besides adopting solar energy in vehicles, offices and houses. Moreover, people would have to stop hacking forests to ensure clean and green atmosphere,” she stressed.**

Provincial Environment and Alternative Energy Minister Shaikh Mohammad Afzal said that the usage of greenhouse gases including methane and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) if continued could double the prevalence of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as compared to the pre-industrial era and the world temperature might increase by two to five degrees centigrade.

“The rise in temperature is causing a change in the world environment. These changes can cause drought and flood situation in alternate years,” he said.

Staff Report

November 11, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Sound management of environmental issues is essential to save ozone layer. Pakistan is fully committed towards global efforts for the conservation of environment and is successfully heading towards complete phase out targets of Ozone depleting substances, said Minister for Environment Hameedullah Jan Afridi. Afridi stated

Continued...

Environment issues’ management vital to protect Ozone layer

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

Cont: to protect Ozone layer

this during a segment of 22nd meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in Bangkok, Thai-

land.

The minister said that Pakistan was playing its due role with aim to reinforce initiatives for conservation of the Ozone layer

Wars taking toll on environment also

INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

By Naveed Tariq

November 06, 2010

International Day for Preventing Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflicts today

Wars and armed conflict not only annihilate human beings but also destroy the environment and wildlife at a large scale. To create awareness on the issue among people at large, the United Nations has declared Nov 6 the International Day for Preventing Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflicts. The day is being observed throughout the world today to call upon the countries and the nations in armed conflicts for long to take preventing measures for preserving environment in their regions.

Kashmir, once called the Heaven on Earth due to its heavenly beautiful natural surroundings, has been turned into a hell due to a heavy presence of the Indian army there for decades. According to a case study, **"Conflict and the Environment in Kashmir"**, conducted by Jennifer Crook, the massive deployment of the Indian armies in Kashmir resulted in large-scale poaching as the troops living in the border areas indulged in killing rare species like the Ibex, Blue Sheep, Urian, the big horned sheep, Antelope and Snow Leopard. At first, the soldiers were killing the animals for food needs, but when the poorly paid soldiers realised how valuable the animal furs and skins were, in the international markets, they started to slaughter the Kashmiri animals with much greater zeal. The consequence has been that some of the rare species like the Snow Leopard, Flying Squirrel and Long Tailed Himalayan Marmot have been pushed to being on the verge of extinction.

Kashmiri stag or Hangul is now only spotted in the northern regions of Kashmir Valley and its overall population has been reduced to less than 300.

According to the state wildlife department no Hangul's have been sighted between 1991-1994 in their usual habitat, "the winter zone." Barking Deer, Cheetal, Nilgai, Musk Deer, Himalayan Black Bear, Shapu, Ibex, Blue Sheep, Marmot and Lynz may soon become extinct if their unrestricted slaughter is not checked.

The wildlife population throughout the valley is rapidly declining because of extensive areas of deforestation resulting in the loss of natural habitat for wildlife. For the past seven years widespread use of high velocity rifles by security forces in villages and forests surrounding the Himalayan Valley in their pursuit to apprehend the Kashmiri

freedom fighters, have further added to the total loss of specie lives lost in an already precarious situation.

Over 300 species of birds which included Pheasants, Quills, Partridges, Vultures, Kites, Eagles and a large number of colourful birds, all of which use to reside in the lush forests of Kashmir have virtually disappeared. Today those forests stand naked and void of any visible sign of bird life. Along with loss of forest, Kashmir has also lost a number of wildlife sanctuaries. A rich variety of birds, Ducks, Geese Cranes, Coots, Terns and water-fowls however still nest in the wetlands, lakes and streams in Kashmir.

At this time there is no effective legislation in force to prevent environmental and ecological damage which is being inflicted upon the natural resources of this beautiful Himalayan region by the presence of military forces and constant fighting.

According to New Delhi-based OneWorld South Asia organisation, the number of Indian army and paramilitary troops deployed in the state is at around one million. The army and paramilitary have set up camps in the forest areas. Presently there are over 671 security camps in Kashmir which occupy more than 90,000 acres of land.

The Gulf War also produced similar negative environmental impacts through the targeting of oil tankers and oil production facilities. According to the 1993 Marine Pollution Bulletin, 6-8 million barrels of crude oil was spilled from sunken vessels and from oil transfer facilities between January 19-28, 1991. Reports suggest that approximately 30,000 marine birds perished as a result of this incident, and this figure excludes those that were trapped in oil pools in the desert. Furthermore, approximately 20pc of mangroves were contaminated, 50pc of coral reefs affected, and hundreds of square miles of sea grass infected.

Such ecological disasters have an immediate impact not only human beings but also on the flora and fauna of affected areas. An Israeli army attack on an oil depot in a Beirut power station caused spread of 20,000 tonnes oil in the 90-kilometre coastal belt.

When Serbian forces systematically destroyed villages and towns in the 1999 Kosovo conflict, they also destroyed clean drinking water supplies and waste systems. And though decades have passed since US forces cleared 325,000 hectares in the Vietnam War by spraying the defoliant Agent Orange, biodiversity losses are still very much in evidence. Areas once covered by forests and mangroves now support just low-density grasslands and mudflats.

In the Central African Republic, hunting and poaching in war-torn provinces **reduced the country's elephant numbers by 90 per cent to just 5,000** and led to the disappearance of the rhinoceros.

Amid war's brutality, death, and deprivation, the environment may seem a minor casualty. Yet, the destruction of the environment, along with the demolition of democratic, informed decision-making, can prolong human suffering for decades, undermining the foundation for social progress and economic security.

MFF initiative to protect mangroves



November 03, 2010

Karachi: An initiative is being taken to protect and enhance mangroves under the MFF 'Mangora for the future'. This was stated by the Inspector General of Forests, Syed Mahmood Nasir. An IUCN statement issued here said that the depletion of mangroves forests causes severe threat to the ecosystem of the region, lives and business of thousands of souls living in coastal areas of Pakistan.

The IUCN statement said that MFF is a regional initiative started in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami. After successful completion of its first phase, the MFF has now entered in its second phase.

Shah Murad Aliani, Country Representative IUCN Pakistan, said that bringing together the dynamic environmental intelligentsia was a milestone achievement for us as they formulated an acclaimed National Action Plan and Strategy for Pakistan. The National Coordination Body also discussed the draft strategy and different aspects of engaging private sector of Pakistan for improvement in the coastal ecosystem.

MFF is worldwide mangroves plantation campaign aimed at protecting global coastal ecosystems and residing communities. It is supported by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to promote investment in coastal ecosystem conservation for sustainable development. Mangroves provide breeding ground for variety of fish, shrimps, crabs and other invertebrates and also are of great significance as a source of nutrients for fisheries.

Since majority of the people residing near or around the coastal areas are engaged in fishing and related activities, mangroves make an important contribution to the local and national economy.

Reference Laboratory for Poultry Diseases yet to be upgraded



By Asad Farooq

November 15, 2010

KARACHI: The National Reference Laboratory for Poultry Diseases (NRLPD) Islamabad is yet to be upgraded to Bio-Security Level (BSL)-3 despite receiving approval over two years ago.

The NRLPD plays a vital role in the surveillance of bird flu and other deadly viral infections, which are transferable from birds to human beings.

National Avian Influenza Control Programme Sindh Coordinator Dr Muhammad Aslam Jalali said the NRLPD is the only lab of its kind in Pakistan.

The Office International des Épizooties, also known as the World Organisation for Animal Health, had declared Pakistan as free from bird flu after the NRLPD's results.

It is necessary to upgrade this lab to BSL-3 to make it more effective

and to protect the lives of the people working there.

Only two rooms of the lab have been upgraded to BSL-3, but the need of the hour is to convert it into a complete BSL-3 lab.

Biosafety Association of Pakistan Chairperson Dr Shahana Urooj said the NRLPD should be upgraded to BSL-3 not because this lab could also conduct surveillance of dengue, swine flu and other deadly viruses.

Eidul Azha is approaching and animals are brought to cities from interior parts of the province and country for sacrificing.

These animals carry pests that carry viruses, which could be transferred to human beings.

It is a very serious issue and authorities concerned should take action, as the NRLPD could play a vital role in preventing people from contracting deadly viral infections.

A few months ago, some casualties occurred from the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever, for which a virus was responsible; and these mortalities were signs for relevant authorities.

One of the victims was a butcher, which is said to be one of the most

Continued...

Cont: Laboratory for Poultry Diseases

vulnerable jobs with regard to contracting highly infectious diseases.

Majority of the cases have occurred in those involved with livestock, such as veterinarians, and agricultural and slaughterhouse workers.

Several doctors treating the affected people later died of the same viral infections.

All these facts demand higher BSLs in labs and enhancement of labs like the NRLPD.

Bird Flu Control Programme Sindh Surveillance Officer Dr Rashid Farooq said diagnosis and monitoring of the avian influenza is the responsibility of the NRLPD.

This lab has the ability of analysing the behaviour and structure of all types of viruses, and it has been performing this duty with regard to the bird flu virus since 2004.

The new equipment would enable the lab to test samples to determine the strain of the avian flu virus within six hours.

The NRLPD is the only Food and Agriculture Organisation-approved lab for handling the avian influenza pandemic in South Asia, so samples from various South Asian countries are sent there for virus isolation

and other tests.

The matter of concern is that the lab is not being completely upgraded to BSL-3, which means that a large number of researchers, including 47 PhD scholars, are risking their lives by performing their duties.

Sources in the NRLPD said the lab had been approved for being upgraded more than two years ago, but the authorities are delaying it on **the pretext of “lack of funds”**.

Interestingly, offers by various international organisations, including United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), are already available for upgrading the lab.

It is also being said that whenever the government is asked for funds, **they say, “We are facing shortage of funds for provision of drinking water. How can we provide funds for enhancement of the lab?”**

However, it is incomprehensible why the higher authorities do not **accept USAID or other agencies’ offers when they are facing shortage of funds**.

According to sources, some corrupt elements are creating hurdles in the enhancement of the lab, as they want their share in the funds allocated for this purpose.

No water is a waste water



By Riaz Missen

November 12, 2010

A report of the World Bank of 2005 that highlighted the grave consequences of building dams and reducing the bed of the meandering rivers on ecology and environment of the Indus Valley, duly termed Pakistan a water-stressed country. The situation has become grave since population has increased manifold but the volume of available water has drastically reduced. The said report while stressing on the point that no additional water can be made available to cater to the growing needs of Pakistan, suggested the rational use of this gift of nature as the only remedy.

Though meagre budgetary allocations for environment speak volumes about the neglect which this sector is subjected to, going by the level

of awareness among the parliamentarians and the concerned minister, hope about change for good may survive. After all this was the Lower House where a resolution was submitted by 43 of its members suggesting the government to propose India for the joint management of Himalayan watershed given the consequences the fast melting of glacier can bring for both of the entire South Asian region. One does not know whether the terror-stricken foreign ministry has even taken note of the above mentioned resolution or not. Climate change, if our realist foreign minister, the wise president and pragmatic premier bother to pay due attention to, has potential to destabilise politics, both at the domestic and international national level. Just think about the rising temperature that is bringing seasonal changes. Violent rains, floods and droughts are essential features of the phenomenon. Crop patterns and human settlements may also change. People may be dislocated both due to excess or scarcity of water. Monsoon rains may hit new regions and abandon the lower ones. Over all, the entire situation may come so complicated that if made no preparation now, **country’s integrity may be endangered by climate change**.

Continued...

Cont: No water is a waste water

During some upcoming years we may witness the increasing body of water rushing and gushing down Himalayas and reaching Arabian Sea with a lightening speed — destroying crops and homes and killing people and live stock. Even the Hakra River (this year it flowed), as mighty as Indus but dead since centuries, may revive; Sutlej River may also change route and rejoin Hakra. Other years may witness droughts, less rains and no melting glaciers — humans wandering here and there in search of water. The government, for sure, has to take up the remedial measures to cope with the change in the climate. Fortunately, infrastructure is there. The strict implementation of the environmental laws constitutes essentials of the good governance. Devolution of power is another. More than these steps is reformulation of the development policy so that it confirms to the environmental requirements. Use of poison in agriculture needs to be strictly banned and the industrial units have to be forced to abandon the law — the untreated industrial effluent not only contaminates soil and water but also inflicts huge damage to human health. At the same time, it is myth that Pakistan can't have additional water. At least it is not true in terms of catering to the agricultural needs. The wastewater, which constitutes 32 MAF, goes virtually waste every year. This water can be tapped and treated through the safest method known as bioremediation. The inputs (aquatic plants and microbes) are indigenously available and no equipments are needed to be imported at inflated price. If the government becomes committed enough to make available to the country 32 MAF water, local and provincial governments may initiate and complete projects on priority basis. The metropolitans, union councils and housing societies across the country may initiate projects to prevent the sewage water falling into canals and rivers.

Actually a model project has been completed at Islamabad by National Institute of Bioremediation by diverting the sewage of Chak Shahzad to

National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC). The project has been completed in less than one year and the wastewater it has treated is being utilised for the cultivation of about 500 acres of barren land. If the model project implemented with sincerity in Pakistan, only Lahore produces annually the water that is enough to fill Tarbela Dam in full capacity. The additional benefit of trapping wastewater and bioremediating it will be of drastically cutting down the health budget due to reduction in waterborne diseases the wastewater causes every year. According to estimates about 114 billion rupees are spent annually to treat the patients who are one way or the other become the victim of pollution in soil and water bodies due to non-treating of the sewage water and industrial effluent.

It is worth mentioning that the 50% percent agricultural needs are being met through pumping out ground water which is dangerous for the aquifers of the dry region particularly those where heaven showers less rains and the water channels (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) have ceased to carry floods. The blindness pumping may contaminate water which may cause a number of diseases among human beings. The major load on aquifers occurs during the season in which the wheat crop is sown and grown. Scientists say, if proper planning is made the entire watering needs of wheat crop can be met by trapping and treating the wastewater. Besides rethinking development policy, the government will have to reset its priorities vis-à-vis education and information. The media in public and private sector can launch mass awareness campaign and print and air special reports, news and drama to help people understand nature in a better way. Actually, not understanding nature is the worst form of ignorance.

Energy crisis and the possible solutions

DAWNCOM

November 08, 2010

As we talk of the energy crisis and the possible solutions to it, we need to understand the policies that govern the energy currently being used in Pakistan. The energy mix of Pakistan is no enigma. Primarily based on oil and gas to generate electricity, we simply do not utilise coal or focus on any other form of energy for power generation; and so, we have an alarming situation. There is over 40 per cent dependence on gas, while 30 per cent of all our power is acquired through oil. Majority of which,

over 72 per cent is imported oil. This forces Pakistan to import over 300,000 bbl/day of oil.

Muhammad Saleem Sethi, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance, explaining the dependence on oil to the students of Public Policy at National Defence University, said that, "When oil prices peaked in at \$147 a barrel, Pakistan's finance ministry had kept funds for imports of oil in accordance with \$80 a barrel. As a result, not only it had to re-allocate budget, but pay an increased price to keep the power plants running."

In 2005, an energy plan was devised by the Government of Pakistan, which showed a heavy reliance on gas, an outcome of which is the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline agreement. Due to increased dependence on gas and imported oil, the debt in the energy sector increased to

Continued...



Cont: Energy crisis and the possible solutions

\$3.6 billion dollars in the period of 2005-2008, and no new power generation plant was initiated.

Furthermore, the energy mix in of Pakistan shows only 9 per cent utilisation of coal out of which only 0.1 per cent is used for power generation. In a comparison with other countries, Pakistan lags behind to a considerable degree. It is seen that coal is responsible for 72 per cent **of China's power needs, 56 per cent of Indian needs, where as the US** utilises more than 50 per cent of coal in its power generation.

Globally, the share of coal in power generation is 38 per cent, compared to 0.1 per cent in Pakistan. Although, developed nations discourage power generation through coal, it should be noted that no developed nation which has this resource, had abandoned it as yet. In the past, industrialisation was started in England due to its coal reserves, and a number of English statesmen have termed it the 'lifeline' of the United Kingdom. Pakistan has been blessed by huge lignite coal reserves, and it is of imminent importance that the same be included in the energy mix of Pakistan. However, such an inclusion faces severe criticism from the eco-friendly post-Kyoto protocol world.

If we only take the cumulative savings into account, due to devaluation of the Pakistani currency and fluctuations in oil prices, the fuel replacement from oil to coal will save Pakistan \$87 billion from one block of the Thar Coal fields alone till 2070. Cambridge Energy Research Associates estimates the Net Present Value of savings at Rs. 3.2 trillion over a period of 60 years. With these savings in view, the trade-off between environment and economy seems to be a viable option.

Pakistan is not among the great polluters of the world nor is it utilising its given resource that can easily make its energy secure in the long run. The trade-off is clearly feasible and in our favour. With newer methods of gasification of coal under-ground, even the said pollution can be lowered drastically, and the benefits of these huge reserves reaped for present and future security of our country. A chemical analysis of the given coal reserves shows that not only it is a moderate-good quality lignite coal deposit, but has a lot of moisture in it, further benefiting the gasification process. Being a non-renewable energy reserve, we also have to consider the amount of coal present in these deposits. Studies show that the deposits are enough to meet the energy requirements of Pakistan for at least the next 200 years.

Whether or not we will start the extraction in 200 years is a different debate altogether. Until and unless our policymakers realise the importance of stability, the suffering of the poor, and the merits of austerity, new projects will perhaps never see the light of day. Thar Coal reserves have been left untouched until recently, when a presidential order was given to start yet another committee on it – a committee, which too has not yielded any significant result due to the raging deluge that came down on our nation, drowning everything in its path.

Ajaz Ali Khan, Secretary to Sindh government, briefing about the **amount of coal present in Pakistan said, "Total reserve is equivalent to 50 billion tones of oil (more than Iran and Saudi Arabia combined oil reserves) or over 2000 TCF of Gas (42 times greater than total gas reserves discovered in Pakistan so far)."**

Continued...

Cont: Energy crisis and the possible solutions

The outcomes and advantages of Thar Coal project are sustainable, is a relatively less expensive fuel, massive benefit to the economy, savings on foreign exchange, and employment generation. In May, 2007 the Asian Development Bank released a report which said; "Thar lignite once mined, is a useable fuel or carbon resource".

On February 8, 2008, the President of Pakistan gave a green signal to once again study and initiate the Thar Coal Project for power generation. For the said purpose, Thar Coal Mining Company was initiated to provide coal for the Independent Power Plants (IPPs). This positive step has received a green signal a number of times in the past, now only if we can take the first step.

According to the research conducted by EMR in collaboration with the Petroleum Institute of Pakistan, the contribution to GDP in plants, products, services, employment, etc. would be in the range of \$200 - \$300 billion, which clearly exceeds the total GDP of Pakistan. Not only that but in July 2009, the World Bank team comprising Ekaterina N. Mikhaylova, Senior Project Officer Oil, Gas, Mining and Chemicals Department, Robert Murphy, a consultant of Oil, Gas, Mining Policy Division visited Thar Coal fields, it was estimated by further studies conducted that the coal deposits of the area have a very large content of water, around 40 per cent, as a result of which it will also help the local population.

Thar coal project will generate positive externalities such as creating hundreds of jobs, along with cumulative net savings, savings on valuable foreign exchange, and most importantly, energy generation and a balance in the future energy mix of Pakistan.

Policy level issues that are directly related to this project also include displacement and community issues of the local people, because there is no clear community welfare policy. Local government and people of Thar region would like to be in charge of this project and have a say in the

final decision making so they not feel left out. Concerns of local people should be kept in mind; a detailed description of the project which outlines the benefits to the local community and people by creating infrastructure and jobs will help gather support for the project, and it can as a result be successfully initiated without much opposition.

Finally, one has to figure out that whether Thar coal reserves offer a positive long term solution for the energy crisis that has crippled the economy of Pakistan, or if other alternatives pose a better solution. There are a number of alternatives available to meet the increasing energy requirements of Pakistan. Besides the indigenous fuel of Thar coal, there are somewhat promising capabilities of Hydel, Wind and Solar Energy. Although, Pakistan has a considerable portion devoted to Hydel Power Generation, Wind and Solar Energy is almost entirely neglected.

It is not difficult to comprehend however, that developing Thar coal fields offer not only higher feasibility and political acceptance than many alternatives available, but it offers far higher and beneficial outcomes, advantages, and positive externalities. Through this project, the imbalance in the energy mix of Pakistan can be addressed, and so can the issue of energy security for the future, and a self-reliant economy that we so impatiently dream about.

Perhaps the crises that Pakistan is encircled in today will not allow any ground work to start in the near future, but there is a serious requirement for consideration of developing the neglected Thar coal fields. Today, all the great nations that stand tall have foundations that were once set on coal. It is about time that Pakistan realises its potential and builds for itself the same foundations, so that tomorrow it too can be a great nation through the gifts of its own land, rather than the crutches of international aid.

Environment Ministry finalises energy conservation law



By Tahir Amin
November 12, 2010

ISLAMABAD : The Ministry of Environment has finalised energy conservation law, which is likely to be placed in the cabinet for approval. This was stated by Minister for Environment Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi while

addressing the inaugural session of two-day international conference on "climate change and development" organised by Ministry of Environment in collaboration with United Nations here on Thursday.

The minister also announced that climate change policy would be placed next year after going into extensive consultative process. "The climate change has serious global implications for Pakistan, as manifested during the last few years in shape of earthquake and devastating flood. Pakistan has suffered from worst draught, strong heat waves, cyclones, erratic monsoons, glaciers melting and devastating heavy rains in the recent history", Afridi added.

He further said that global warming is haunting the world at large and South Asia in particular. During last few years, climate change

Continued...

Cont: Environment Ministry finalises energy conservation law

has become a major world-wide concern, the minister added. "Ministry of Environment has focused on developing a long term strategic framework for climate change and striving to improve the capacity of the national and provincial governance," said Afridi, adding that Pakistan has been proactively leading the on-going international negotiations at the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change. As the Chair of G-77 China and Pakistan played a constructive role in seeking consensus on the Bali Plan of Action, he added.

Afridi urged that the time has now come to realise the need to mainstream climate change concerns into the larger development paradigm. The Ministry is focusing on developing a long term strategic framework for climate change focusing mainly on adaptation needs, to

provide a sustainable basis for socio-economic growth in consultation with the relevant stakeholders including the public and private sector, he added.

The minister further said that Ministry of Environment is actively endeavouring to create a framework, which could spark relevant and specific policies and interventions needed to address the issue of environment through increased institutional capacity, mainstreaming environmental concerns in development planning for sustainable growth and generally improving the quality of life by decreasing poverty and arresting environmental degradation. He also hoped that through this conference common understanding would be developed to meet the challenges and threats posed by climate change.

Ozone layer's protection vital to world sustainability

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

Staff Report
November 13, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is committed to contribute towards global efforts for conservation and improvement of environment, Minister for Environment Hameedullah Jan Afridi said on Friday.

Afridi said this at a high-level segment of the 22nd meeting of parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone layer in Bangkok, Thailand.

He said Pakistan was in full compliance with regard to import and consumption limits of first generation of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). Moreover, he said import and consumption of these substances had been completely eliminated.

Pakistan, UNESCAP agree to deepen cooperation in environment sector

November 15, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) have agreed to further upgrade mutual cooperation in the field of environment. This was decided during the meeting between Federal Minister for Environment Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Noeleen Heyzer at the UNESCAP headquarters in Bangkok, said a message from Bangkok issued here.

The meeting took place on the sidelines the 22nd Meeting of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone, where the Environment Minister represented Pakistan.

Executive Secretary Dr. Heyzer, who recently returned from a visit to Pakistan, told Minister Afridi that she had a very useful meetings with

President Zardari and Prime Minister Gilani helped identify specific areas in which both sides would be working together to deepen mutually beneficial collaboration.

The Minister for Environment highlighted the measures taken by the government of Pakistan in the environment sector including increasing awareness about the environment and effects of climate change, laying down the policy framework, promoting a process that involves participation of relevant stakeholders, and advancing the goals of long-term sustainable development.

Minister Afridi and the Executive Secretary focused on subjects relating to solid waste management, energy security, regional connectivity, and green growth.

There was agreement to devote special attention to technical assistance and capacity building.

In a subsequent session, senior ESCAP officials from the Environment

Continued...

Cont: Pakistan, UNESCAP agree to

and Development Division briefed the Environment Minister on various aspects of the work being done by ESCAP.

Both sides designated respective focal points to follow-up on the specific ideas identified for collaboration.

Speaking on the occasion, Pakistan's Ambassador to Thailand and Permanent Representative to UNESCAP Sohail Mahmood emphasized the importance of a strong Pakistan-ESCAP partnership.

He added that the agreed cooperation in the environment sector would help advance this shared objective.

Seminar on 'Energy & Environment' held



November 16, 2010

Islamabad—A seminar on 'Energy and Environment: Pakistan Scenario' was held here on Saturday. It was organized by National Energy Conservation Centre (Enercon) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Managing Director ENERCON Fareed ullah Khan was chief guest while

JICA Chief Takatoshi Nishikata was guest of honour. Speaking on the occasion, MD Fareed ullah Khan said energy and environment protection is an all embracing cross cutting and continuous challenge. He said all out efforts are being made to get efficiency in energy sector.

He said Japan is our major and sincere partner that is providing valuable assistance to meet the challenges of energy and environment. Chief Representative JICA Takatoshi Nishikata said Japan is helping Pakistan in overcoming its energy crisis through various projects. He said the cooperation will continue to get efficiency in energy sector and make Pakistan a clean and green country. —NNI

Soaring livestock prices hit Eid sacrifices in Pakistan



November 16, 2010

ISLAMABAD — Most of Pakistan's Muslims will be unable to join in Eid celebrations with the traditional animal sacrifice this week as cattle prices have more than doubled in the wake of the country's fatal floods. After two months of catastrophic late summer flooding swept hundreds of thousands of animals away, livestock traders say supply is so short that they have had to hike prices beyond the means of lower and middle class families.

The annual Islamic holiday, which falls from November 17 to 19 in Pakistan, is marked by the ritual sacrifice after morning prayers of sheep, goats, cows and other livestock whose meat is then shared with the poor.

But the average price of a goat has climbed to 21,000 rupees (250 dollars), according to an AFP survey of markets in five cities across Pakistan -- a sum far too high for most families in the impoverished and largely rural nation.

Sheep were fetching the equivalent of between 175 and 300 US dollars and the price of an average cow was 400 dollars, while the more highly-prized bulls were being sold for up to 1,100 dollars.

The government's fixed wage for a labourer is just 80 dollars per

month, while an average middle-class salary is about 230 dollars per month.

"The rates are beyond my budget -- it's not possible for me to perform this Islamic duty," said Sabih Ahmad in the western city of Quetta.

"I think more than half of the people will not be able to sacrifice animals this Eid."

Last year an average sheep cost 70 dollars, while a goat was 87 US dollars in local markets. Cows and bulls were being sold for between 230 and 300 dollars.

"So many animals were killed by the floods -- this is basically the reason for the high rates," Hijab Khan, a cattle trader at a market in the outskirts of the northwestern city of Peshawar, told AFP.

An official report by Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority said that more than 300,000 cattle died in the devastating floods.

Despite Islamic charity banners and posters in all the major Pakistani cities asking people to take part in the sacrifice, it seems unlikely that many will be able to join in.

Javed Hussain, a livestock trader in Lahore, admitted that prices had risen and said business was badly affected.

"It's a big problem. We have bought the animals but nobody is buying," he said.

Continued...

Cont: Soaring livestock prices hit Eid

But another market trader, Jalil Khan, was not convinced the floods were the cause of the problem, saying: "A large number of animals are being smuggled to Afghanistan."

Cattle fetch even higher prices in the neighbouring war-torn country, where livestock is in short supply all year round.

In the capital Islamabad and the adjacent city of Rawalpindi, traders blamed the shortage of animals for the soaring prices, but buyers blamed the beleaguered and widely unpopular government for failing

to control prices.

"There is no price control mechanism so the traders are demanding their own high prices," said buyer Khalid Khan, adding that he would pool his funds with others to buy one animal for the slaughter this year.

Islamic charities have been offering families a share in a collective sacrifice for about 100 dollars, itself a hike from only 65 to 85 dollars last year.

Citizens join bicycle campaign on pollution awareness

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

By Imran Cjaudhary

LAHORE: At least 700 citizens have joined Critical Mass Lahore, a cycling event, in a campaign against overwhelming influx of motor vehicles in the city, which has made the metropolis the most polluted city in Pakistan.

The group, setup by Lahore Bachao Tehreek activist Rafey Alam, is continuing their awareness campaign through bicycle rides along with their members in different parts of the city. Its message is that usage of bicycles could not only stop pollution in the city but it was the best way to adopt a cost-effective and healthy lifestyle.

The Critical Mass organised a similar event in Samanabad, where dozens of their members, including men, women and children participated with their bicycles. The members move in a huge group in different areas and not only encourage others to start using bicycles but also inform the motorists about the hazards of carbon emission and other kinds of pollutants.

One of the organisers named Naeem Iqbal told Daily Times that the



campaigners also stopped vehicle drivers on the roads and urged them to have a healthy and environment-friendly lifestyle for the sake of themselves and their city.

He also added that a large number of international audiences appreciated their movement and people from different countries were not only appreciating them but also sharing their ideas in order to launch similar moves in their countries.

He added that they have not developed any admission form for membership nor is there any fee for that, and all citizens can join them at any time. Naeem added that more details about the Critical Mass were available on Facebook. He added that the schedule about their weekly bicycle rides is updated on Facebook and all the members are also informed about it.

Early warning system project for drought, flood approved

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

November 17, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Environment Hameedullah Jan Afridi on Tuesday approved project of early warning system at community level for more active response to natural disasters like drought and floods.

Afridi chaired a briefing on 'Strengthening drought and floods early warning system in Pakistan', an initiative of the Ministry of Environment under its GEF-UNDP funded Sustainable Land Management Project (SLMP). The existing early warning system will be strengthened in collaboration with Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

The changing pattern of monsoons in Pakistan

<http://blog.dawn.com/>

By Sohail Ahmed

November 15, 2010

Our country has witnessed an unprecedented stretch of devastating monsoons this year. Flooding affected nearly 20 million people and has crippled the already fragile economy. A number of informative articles have been written on the disaster such as that written for a daily by a former minister for environment and **'The flood and disaster observatory'** highlighting governance issues by Dr. Sania Nishtar, **'Weather chaos in Pakistan'** by Dr. Qamar uz Zaman Chaudhry and **'Will the Pakistan floods strike again?'** by Howard Falcon-Lang. However, these leave a niche to cover up some important aspects of monsoons in the country through the article under study.

The main purpose here is to bring forth the scientifically justifiable aspects not taken into account that caused the heaviest deluge this year and to have a preventive arrangement to keep the loss and disturbance level to minimum in the future. Pakistan has to give a lot more consideration to the global warming phenomenon in the region, as there is a much higher probability with which the monsoons are expected to afflict misery on our nation. Our defocused vision has until now not seen the writing on the wall and therefore lack of understanding has made us impervious to natural alerts and warnings. Pakistan has already been placed very high on vulnerability and other natural calamity hit lists such as the Maple Croft Index.

Before focusing on floods caused by monsoons, a little mention about the hype that the deluge has been caused through unprecedented glacial melting because we have world's biggest glacier system comprising Boltoro, Soltoro, Siachin Hispar etc is in the offing. The argument that the high energy beam (HAARP) has been used to quicken the melting is not tenable. In fact, troubling factor has been the abnormally high-density vapours and clouds causing torrential rains in short time which swelled the Kabul River (an area quite far from the Pakistani main glacier system). It is agreed that these glaciers sent more water to river Indus due to continued high temperatures during summer but it cannot be considered the cause of delug-

ing and inundating the way we have experienced this year.

Some experts have opined that this has been a **'once in a century event'**, but this also incorrect. We are up against a phenomenon which is a direct consequence of global warming and we are now bound to have an increase in the frequency of such deluges in our part of the world. Some experts have even suggested that these glaciers will be wiped off in about 30 years which is a total misconception.

Our monsoon cloud system is based on evaporation from the Bay of Bengal, mainly causing rains in Punjab and Northern Areas, while the Arabian Sea (adding to the main cloud system from Bay of Bengal) brings rain in Sindh and Balochistan. Overall vapour contents are the result of composite heat during summer in the Indian subcontinent, surface temperature of Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. Moisture spreads northward from the Bay of Bengal, which then splits up and carries the clouds westward along the Himalayas through complex aerodynamics. Vapour density starts increasing as days turn from warm to hot in the subcontinent.



Along the route of these clouds, Bengal gets average 100 inch per year as per available area-wise variegated data. Bihar on an average gets around 70 inches, UP around 55 inches, East Punjab nearly 40 inches. Accordingly, distribution in Pakistani cities runs as: Lahore 21 inches (30 years back the figure of 100 year average was 23 inches), Sialkot 32 inches, Islamabad/Rawalpindi 36 inches, Murree hills 55 inches (highest in the country). Then these clouds with lesser moisture, move towards KP and rainfall decreases considerably, varying from region to region. In some areas like Mianwali, Dikhan etc, annual average is around 12 inches for a normal rainy season. Sindh and Balochistan are also relatively dry but during some years, the Arabian Sea system brings additional moisture causing flash floods in Karachi and along the coastal belt.

This year has been extremely unusual. The heat index around the Indian peninsula during March and April has been so high that all records since the year 1900 have been broken. This resulted in a higher moisture content and the clouds which have normal height around 22,000 feet had to retain more water sending vapours further high, higher than the Himalayan range. This resulted in an interesting phenomenon; the pattern of monsoons remained as usual, i.e., the arrival of monsoons in Pakistan

Continued...

Cont: The changing pattern of monsoons in Pakistan

moving along the north Indian plane was not early. But the clouds were of extremely high density and many a time the columns (i.e. cumulonimbus) above the ground rose to a height of more than 40,000 ft. For this reason, the heaviest of downpours were witnessed in India and also in Pakistan. Higher density vapours available throughout the monsoons in the troposphere could have easily been sucked in case any ducting phenomenon appeared (as reported by Dr. Qamar in his article). Thus, cumulative rain water in catchment areas in upper half of the country steadily rose. Southward outlet (near Attock area) was slow and the resulting flash floods created havoc and brought untold misery. There was no proper fore-warning activity although some Flood Warning arrangements are supposed to be in place. An investigation on account of incompetence, lack of imagination and pathetic handling should be ordered.

Briefly, corruption, improper handling of data regarding temperature, rainfall, mapping of water accumulation areas, rain water storage and drainage studies and an inefficient monitoring and reporting mechanism have contributed towards bad governance in this matter. Therefore, taking into account all possible mechanisms based on which these floods caused devastation, comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) need to be redrafted and a working model must be evolved for a timely roll out. Adequate coordination, monitoring and system optimisation has to be ensured for keeping the sufferings to minimum.

From a general perspective, urgent steps like revitalising the NDMA with full authority and responsibility with proper supporting set-up, improving data center through raising efficiency with the help of re-

mapped affected areas, implementing redrafted SOPs and properly engaging the staff for overall surveillance and monitoring, speedy co-ordination making use of available resources like the Global Flood Detection System, tree planting and fund leakage plugging through proper check and balance, should immediately be taken.

Other resources such as the meteorological data information should be regularly obtained, analysed and suitable alerts issued, especially the rainfall patterns in Bengal, Bihar, UP, East Punjab and along the **Himalayan slopes should be 'microscopically' studied and as far as possible, a liaison with Met offices of India should be established.** Community participation should be streamlined through available facilities. Periodic reporting, performance monitoring, expenditure control, purchase of modern equipment with latest software and training of the personnel are very essential to make the effort a success. Above all, long-term planning encompassing topographic study of the water flow area and demographic aspects would help the future governments avert the impact of such a disaster to a greater degree.

Monsoon period, this year, is practically over. Rehabilitation is going to take months and we may again be caught in a similar situation next year (although the probability of an unprecedented monsoon season for consecutive years is extremely small). Let us be prepared and take what ever steps are technically, financially and logically possible. Our nation should not be exposed to the repeat of non-professionalism, callousness, carelessness and ill-preparedness as we have witnessed this year. All concerned should play their part and try to do their bits. Pakistanis, despite all the handicaps and problems, have the potential to rise to the occasion, and this is high time for the government functionaries and all others in the chain to prove that.

Import/export licence of wildlife

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

By Ijaz Kakakhel

ISLAMABAD: The government has collected an amount of Rs 3.065 million in the first six months of 2010 as fee for issuing import/export licences of wildlife under the provision of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), sources told Daily Times.

The National Council for Conservation of Wildlife (NCCW) is the regulatory body for import and export of wildlife under the provision of CITES to which the government of Pakistan is also signatory. An amount of Rs 3.66, 1.52 millions as fee for exports and imports of wildlife was deposited in the government exchequer for the calendar year 2008 and 2009 respectively.

The number of companies registered for wildlife trade during 2010 are 18 and the number of CITES exports permits issued during the current year was 39, the sources maintained. The number of NOCs issued for non-CITES species were 101 and the number of CITES import permits issued during 2009-10 were 5.

The sources said that the NCCW was being an attached department of ministry of environment performed the function of formulation of appropriate policy for conservation of wildlife, coordination between provinces and liaison with international agencies regarding wildlife conservation.

About hunting of Markhor, the sources said that initially the quota of six Markhor trophies was approved by the CITES in 1998 for trophy hunting since the trophy hunting programme was so successful and the number of game animals increased and CITES in its Conference of Parties increased the quota from 6 to 12. The quota for the year 2009 has not been fully utilised due to law and order situation in the country. However, on the request of provinces the quota remained the same, which would be utilised.

Continued...

Cont: Import/export licence of wildlife

The NCCW meeting allocated the trophy hunting quota for all the four provinces well before next trophy hunting season in its latest meeting as under; In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the quota was four (for Chitral and Kaigah), in Northern Areas the quota was four for Markhor, and in Balochistan for Torghar area the quota for Markhor was also four.

The sources further said that the allocation of hunting areas — for decades — has been made by the ministry of foreign affairs without consultation of provincial governments. For the first time ever, the issue has been referred to Inter Provincial Coordination Committee (IPCC) by the ministry of environment. The meeting held in Karachi recently took several decisions. It also constituted a committee under the chairmanship of the federal minister for environment to review the process of allocation of hunting areas to the foreign dignitaries for Houbara bustard hunting and allied matters.

The meeting also decided that the provincial authorities would prepare the list of potential sites for allocation of hunting areas and submit to the ministry of environment. The negative areas of Houbara bustard conservation would also be proposed by the concerned provinces, which would not be allocated for hunting. The

ministry of foreign affair would deal directly with the dignitaries to obtain their demand for hunting areas.

During the meeting it was decided that the ministry of environment would seek opinion/recommendation from the concerned provincial departments regarding proposed hunting areas. The competent authority will be approached for approval of allocation of agreed areas as per recommendation of the provinces. These arrangements were made for a period of one year. After next hunting season the committee constituted by the IPCC would meet again to review the process and its success.

The sources further said that regarding CITES legislation, NCCW in consultation with provincial authorities and other **stakeholders finalised bill entitled "Pakistan Control of Wild Fauna and Flora 2010" for effective implementation** of CITES. This bill has been approved by the Federal Cabinet and has been submitted to the Parliament

Under the constitution, protection and preservation of wildlife was in provincial subject. However, policy formulation, and coordination with international agencies, conventions and provincial / territorial authorities, was carried out at federal level. The council under the chairmanship of minister for environment regularly meets and decides policy issues for nature, conservation.

Climate Change Policy to be landmark achievement of Pakistan



November 24, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Environment Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi has said that it is matter of pride that Ministry of Environment has taken strong initiative for preparing Climate Change Policy Draft.

He said that Sixteenth Conference of Parties (COP-16) would provide **an important platform to express Pakistan's affective point of view** to meet the challenges of climate change and environmental issues. He expressed these view while chairing an important meeting of Core Group on Climate Change here on Tuesday.

He observed that climate change has become the most concerned issue at global level. Pakistan always took strong part in every negotiation process at international level. He said that Pakistan is the most vulnerable country of climate change and global warming.

reflection of our due commitment to face this challenge. It was noted that Climate Change Policy Draft is in final stage. This draft has been made with consultation of all related stakeholders including Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Core group critically analyzed several aspects of Climate Change Policy Draft and gave proposals and suggestions in this context.

Sixteenth Conference of Parties (COP-16) being held on November 29, 2010 to December 10, 2010 in Cancun, Mexico was also an important agenda of the meeting. On this occasion, several preparatory matters related to COP-16 were reviewed. It was pointed out that **comprehensive strategy and all out efforts are being made to highlight Pakistan's image to overcome environmental issues in this Conference.**

Environment Minister reiterated that COP-16 is the most important **platform and would give us the best opportunity to raise Pakistan's concerns on climate change and global warming.** Moreover, COP-16 is an opportunity to inform the world community about initiatives taken by Pakistan to highlight and mitigate environmental problems.

He urged to make sustainable action plan in light of COP-16 so that real image of Pakistan may be highlighted. During the meeting other arrangements for COP-16 were discussed in detail. Federal Minister urged that presentation of Pakistan should be affective and all possible arrangements should be made in this regard.

Pakistan's strong and affective role in environmental sector is a re-

Pakistan is Rich of Natural Habitats, says Afridi



November 14, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Environment Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi has said that legal frame-work is being made for research and usage of natural habitats in medical and other related fields. The revenue would be utilized for social up-lift of related areas.

He said that government is focusing to encourage research activities in this important sector. He expressed these views while chairing a high level meeting here today.

DIG (Forest) Abdul Munaf Qaim Kawani, MD ENERCON, Fareed Ullah Kahn, DG, EPA Asif Shuja Khan, Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) Abid Ali and Technical Officer, Biodiversity Rizwan Irshad present during the meeting.

Environment Minister said that several kinds of genetic resources and

natural habitats are existing in different parts of the country and huge foreign exchange can be earned through appropriate research and utilization of these precious resources.

The Minister highlighted that proper legislation is being made through which foreign institutions would be allowed to take part in exploration and research activities. In this response, adequate revenue would be generated which would be utilized for the betterment and social development of those areas, he added.

Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi further said that Ministry of Environment is focusing on this important issue and in recent tenth session of Conference of Parties, various matters regarding this subject were discussed in detail.

Moreover, a protocol would be signed very soon and an international law would be promulgated according to which research and transaction process would be made through proper permission at government level. He advised concerned authorities to finalize necessary documentation and other formalities in this regard on priority basis.

Fresh water flow in Chotiari Dam to benefit Makhi Forest



November 14, 2010

KARACHI: Release of fresh water into Chotiari Dam in Sanghar district will boost up natural flora and fauna in Makhi Forest besides enhancing sources of livelihood of local community whose major economy depend on livestock, says a survey conducted by the Daily Times at the forest site during an environment awareness visit arranged by the WWF Pakistan.

The Makhi Forest, which is very famous for its natural bee honey, had dried up due to acute water shortage but it has now been recovered by 50 percent due to recent water flows through Nara Canal.

The WWF-Pakistan Chotiari Community Development Officer Moulana Bux Mallah said the excess increase in water level in Chotiari reservoir will pose destructive impact on Makhi Forest and will ruin most of its part again, so, only needful water level would help boost it further. He

said trees hacking by locals and some influential people in the past have affected forest.

Chotiari, a reservoir with rich biodiversity and a junction complex of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of deep water, shallow marshes, riverine forest, ephemeral channels, agriculture land and sand dunes, lies in district Sanghar, Sindh, compassing north western flanks of 'Achro Thar' desert sand dunes that forms its north eastern & eastern boundaries that images a consoling picture in contrast with quaint rainbow beauty of charming hamlets with artistic cone-shaped straw cottages, encircled with silken sand dunes and eastern edge of lower Nara Canal which forms its western and southern margins with an astonishing nature view of riverine forest and agriculture lands with colorful birds.

In the backdrop of 'Hur Revolt' against the colonial rulers these woodlots were converted into agriculture land for administrative reasons and allotted to the retired army personnel. In past time and even earlier before the embankment of a serial complex of lakes to form a storage reservoir, the area embraces of a series of open freshwater and salty water bodies fringed with diverse vegetation. It was considered a rich biodiversity treatise with special relation to the gavial, water otter, crocodile, fresh water turtles and enormous varieties of fishes in wetland ecosystem.

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Cont: Fresh water flow in Chotiari Dam to benefit Makhi

Senior Environmental Education Officer of Chotiari Dam site, WWF Pakistan Naveed Soomro said with one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world, Pakistan 's forests are in urgent need of protection and conservation. Pakistan is a semi arid country with less than five percent of its area under forest cover. At the global level, WWF is lobbying governments to establish an ecologically representative network of protected areas covering at least 10% of each of the world's forest types.

The major threat to Pakistan 's forests is uncontrolled and unsustainable cutting. Reasons for unsustainable commercial harvesting in state forests are lack of political will and commitment, poor planning, unrealistic forest working plans and weak implementation of forest protection laws, he said.

Soomro said that additionally the loss of flora life caused significant impact upon fish catch. Another resource user around reservoir is herdsman who grazes their animal in pastures of the desert. These poor herdsman are not getting proper production from their livestock for malnutrition. Infertile breeds, lack of proper vaccination and treatment is causing big losses to the local livestock farmers. The agriculture depending community is also facing less income problem from the crops. The increased prices of the inputs left a narrow margin between the yield price and exorbitant cultivation expenses. In addition to all these woes, the absence of basic facilities, erratic pattern of rainfall, and lack of income resources coupled with the increasing population pressure results increased environmental degradation.

The WWF-Indus for All Programme conceived all these issues to safeguard the biodiversity richness of the area by adopting the participatory approach to involve all stakeholders that include local user groups, women and youth groups, CCBs, other civil society organizations and government departments. The primary causes of over-harvesting by domestic cutting in private and community forests are widespread poverty, population pressure, lack of fuel wood alternatives, and a lack of awareness about sustainable resource use methods. Uncontrolled use of pesticides, diseases and damage by insects, and fires are other causes of forest degradation, he added.

It was having a significant population of Chinkara, Houbara, bustard, Desert cat, Fishing cat, Caracal, Porcupine, Wild boar, Mangrove, Desert hare, Foxes, Jackal, wild asses and Squirrels in the adjoining patches of Achhro Thar, lower Nara canal and sand dunes (elevated upto 120 feet) existed in the lakes. In the same sequence, it was considered a safe sanctuary for hog deer, python and various extinct species and nesting & feeding grounds for a variety of resident and enormous migratory Siberian birds, out of which marbled teal was using it as breeding place. Chotiari has also a unique opportunity to be the home place of Sindh warbler which is endemic to Sindh, Naveed told.

After infrastructure development to convert these serial complex lakes in water storage reservoir with a view to bring thousands of acres land under cultivation caused change and losses to this juncture of the multiple ecosystems. As a result, the habitats of various unique fauna and flora species lost and endangered and caused significant losses to the population of wildlife. On account of agriculture expansion in the area, deforestation also takes place in unsustainable manner, he informed.

haris hanif

PIBT to be constructed at estimated cost of \$173 million

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

By Moonis Ahmed
November 07, 2010

KARACHI: Pakistan International Bulk Terminal Limited (PIBT) will be the country's first dedicated dirty bulk cargo handling facility which will be constructed with a total estimated cost of approximately \$173 million over the period of 10 years.

Sharique A Siddique, Chief Executive Officer PIBT Saturday informed media during a signing ceremony of Implementation Agreement (IA) for the development of Pakistan's first mechanized and fully auto-

mated environment friendly Coal, Cement and Clinker Terminal at Port Qasim on a thirty (30) year Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis.

In presence of Captain Haleem A Siddiqui, Chairman Marine Group of Companies, the IA for the Terminal Operating Company, PIBT was signed by Chairman PQA Vice Admiral M Shafi HI(M) and Chief Executive Officer PIBT, Mr Sharique A Siddique.

Sharique said that the Port Qasim Authority have sought the participations of foreign and national firms, six firms were pre-qualified for the project. Pakistan International Container Terminal Limited (PICT) being technically and financially best, amongst the bidders, was selected for the project, he added. As per the requirements of PQA, a separate Terminal Operating Company PIBT has been incorporated to carry on the project, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of PICT.

While talking to Daily Times Sahrique said that the project is expected to

Continued...

Cont: PIBT to be constructed at estimated cost

come into operations in three years with an initial project cost of \$40 million.

He said that PIBT would be capable of handling 8 million tonnes per annum of coal, cement and clinker. The jetty shall have a depth of 15 meters with a capability of handling large ships of up to 75000 DWT. The length of the jetty would be around 460 meters which will be connected to the back-up area of 25 hectares with a 2.5 kilometers long. The terminal is planned to have a dedicated storage and handling facilities for each type of cargo.

PIBT is expected to contribute billions of rupees in the national ex-

chequer through taxes and duties. The project will also contribute toward opening up of new employment opportunities in the country including a healthy contribution toward the GDP of the country.

The holding company of PIBT, PICT is the only Container Terminal in Pakistan which is owned by Pakistanis and is the only terminal to be listed on Karachi Stock Exchange. The total investments made in PICT terminal and berths comes around \$150 million.

PICT also has a distinction of being financed by International Finance Corporation, a private sector arm of World Bank Group and is also the first Pakistani private sector project being financed by OPEC Fund for international development.

Biotechnology can bring progress

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

November 24, 2010

KARACHI: Promotion of biotechnology can bring progress in the country. This was stated by the scientists on Tuesday on the second day of the 12th International Symposium on Natural Product Chemistry. The four-day moot is being held at the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), Karachi University.

The experts underlined the importance of biotechnology in the agriculture sector and said that Pakistan can obtain the most wanted level of progress in the country by the use of biotechnology. They said that the successful technology can remove the food scarcity from the country if it is used properly.

Over 470 researchers and scientists from 35 countries are participating

in this symposium, which is considered as one of the most prestigious international events in the field of natural product sciences.

Adviser Science at COMSTECH, Dr Anwar Nasim said that there was dire need to take more benefits from biotechnology, which helps producing genetically modified (GM) crops. He said that in 2001 National Commission on Biotechnology was established by the Ministry of Science and Technology to promote the technology in the country.

Dr Anwar was of the view that biotechnology is such a tool that has applications in agriculture, health, industry and environment. Dr Kamran Azeem of ICCBS discussed malaria and said that malaria is one of major public health problems in the world, which is caused by parasites of the genes plasmodium.

Among others who also spoke on the occasion included Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Shahana Urooj Kazmi, senior professor of ICCBS Dr Bina Siddiqui, Prof Yoshinsa Inoue of Japan, Lalith Jayasinghe, Abul Zahir, Latifah K Darusman, Athar Ata, Radwan S Farag, Anwaul Hassan Gilani, Jun Wu, Mahbur Rahmann, Feras Alali, S Nahid Zafar, Marcos Soto, Abid Ali, Assad Khalid, Danka Obreashkove, Juan Beno and Mah-

Milk price surges Rs4/lit

KARACHI: Pakistan is the fourth large milk producer in the world; however, the prices of milk products continue to rise higher every other day, Geo News reported Monday.

Milk price has once again today mounted Rs4 per liter. Talking to Geo News, Sindh Dairy Farm Chairman said milk was Rs44/lit last year, which has soared Rs12 to Rs56/lit this year. To cap it all, milk price burgeoned by Rs4 from November.

It should be mentioned here that some days back, Sindh High Court (SHC) ordered milk be sold at Rs37/lit; however, this order could not be put into practice. This time round, the cause of hike is the recent

floods across Pakistan that killed at least 12 lakh cattle. Pakistan produces 45 billion liters of milk annually. However, in contrast, only 36.2 billion of liters of milk were usable, as 20 percent milk go waste owing to inappropriate methods and lack of timely transportation.

The US has 3.4 million cattle as compared to five million cattle in Pakistan; but, the milk growth in country is far less than that in the US. To better this system, at least Rs1.5 billion have been allotted to Pakistan Dairy Development; but, Rs500 million of the assigned money could be issued as yet. At least 55 million people work in profession of dairy and livestock in the country.

Endangered snow leopards on killing spree

THE EXPRESS
TRIBUNE
WITH THE International Herald Tribune

November 23, 2010

GILGIT: Wild snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*) are on the rampage in Gilgit-Baltistan as dozens of domesticated animals have been killed by these otherwise highly endangered wildcats, sources said on Monday.

“Over 40 cattle have been killed in Murkhun village of Gojal a day after Eid as the beast broke into a cattle house at night and attacked them,” Mayo Khan, a resident of Gojal told *The Express Tribune* on Monday. **“We are trying to capture photos of the dead animals to submit their case to relevant authorities,”** he added.

Rehman Posh, a resident of Gojal, who is also actively involved in community-based conservation initiatives, said that three of his **brother’s cattle have also been killed by the snow leopard, species** listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the Red Data Book as a globally endangered animal. He said that people avoid taking revenge to protect the extinct animal. District forests officer from the wildlife department, Ghulam Mohammad, said that he has no details about the incident, adding that there are other officials dealing with the issue. Ghulam said that in the past year, over 26 cattle had been killed in an ambush by a



snow leopard in Bargo area, after a shepherd took them to a pasture.

Of the latest spree of killings, nine cattle owned by Rehman Khan Gujar and his son were reportedly killed by a leopard in Danyore last week, an official said.

According to official statistics, it is estimated that the total population of this rare animal is 7,000 to 10,000, of which approximately 300 are found in Pakistan. The attacks on domesticated animals by leopards are frequent across Gilgit-Baltistan as the cattle prove to be an easy prey in the absence of Markhor and other wild animals found in the mountains, which serve as their natural food. In the past, farmers have not been compensated by the government or other relevant organisations for their losses.

Locals say that they will not kill the snow leopard but add that they are worried about safety of their cattle, which is an essential means of livelihood for many families.

Over one third world’ fisheries to decline

PAKISTAN
OBSERVER
Eyes & Ears of Pakistan Widely read & trusted Daily

November 24, 2010

Islamabad: Over two-thirds of the world’s fisheries have been overfished or are fully harvested, whereas, more than one third are in a state of decline due to loss of essential fish habitats, pollution, and global warming, a recent United Nations study reveals.

According to Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF), the country’s 70 percent fisheries have declined production for use of illegal thin size meshes and unrestricted big trawling, sweeping the seabed com-

pletely and killing the undersized marine animals. The other issues include use of lethal fishing meshes, destruction of Indus Delta, lack of primary facilities at fishermen communities, lack of fisheries policy, marine pollution, cut in seafood prices etc, are still unresolved.

Like other parts of the world, the ‘World Fisheries Day’ was observed in Pakistan on Sunday with an aim to resolve the problems faced by fisheries sector. The Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) held a colourful cultural rally in Karachi to press demand for the rehabilitation of flood victims and highlight problems being faced by the fishermen community.

A large number of prominent personalities and activists from fisheries sector, leaders of political parties and social welfare **organizations attended the rally.**

Meanwhile, the families of around 90 fishermen, who are in Indian jails on charges of crossing the disputed sea border, have urged the government to expedite efforts for their return.

Japan to import Pakistani mangoes from next season

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

November 23, 2010

ISLAMABAD: Assuring investment in dairy development and horticulture, a Japanese agriculturists team on Monday assured Pakistani government that the best quality of Pakistani mangoes would reach Japanese markets from the next season.

The Japanese team of eight members expressed these views during a meeting with Federal minister for Food and Agriculture Nazar Mohammad Gondal. The minister said it was extremely encouraging that Pakistani mangoes would arrive into Japanese markets from next season. The eight-member delegation of Japanese agriculturists belonging to renowned Japanese agriculture cooperative organisation (JA) was led by JA Vice Chairman Yasuhiro Nakagawa and JA Group President Kyoto Prefecture.

“We have ample business and investment opportunities for the Japanese investors in Pakistan. We are the world’s fourth largest milk producer and technology to produce by-products from milk would prove extremely beneficial for the Japanese investors. We offer a business conducive environment and opportunities with simple procedures to enter into business deals”, said the minister in his introductory re-

marks.

Yasuhiro Nakagawa said that JA Group was involved in the farmers’ security through credit and insurance policies and marketing their products. The group also dealt in providing the latest farm machinery, which makes it to be the biggest group of its kind in Japan. “We are ready to shift our technology and invest in Pakistan. I have already announced in Japan before my departure that Pakistani mangoes will come into Japanese markets from the next season”, said Nakagawa. Gondal told the delegation that Pakistan has the third largest number of animals in the world, which provided an excellent opportunity for value addition to milk and processing halal meat that had an enormous market across the world. **“We are the fourth largest exporter of dates by exporting only 13 percent of the production (0.567 million tonnes).” It could be greatly enhanced through the introduction of modern processing and packaging technology.** Technology to process and make juices from citrus and mangoes were another potential area for investment.

Nakagawa assured that he would take concrete and practical step to establish a long lasting business relationship with Pakistan. He said the group had already established business models in dairy products in Australia and would replicate the same here in Pakistan. The meeting was also attended by secretary, additional secretary and other high officials of MINFA and representatives from Board of Investment.

G-B lawmakers upset over deforestation

THE EXPRESS
TRIBUNE
WITH THE International Herald Tribune

November 11, 2010

GILGIT: Lawmakers in the Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) Assembly on Wednesday voiced concerns over illegal cutting of trees in forests of Astore and Skardu, saying that this will deprive the region of precious natural resources.

“Is there any department to ask officials of the forestry department why such rampant deforestation is taking place in Gilgit-Baltistan?” Abdul Hamid, a Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) lawmaker from Astore asked while speaking on a point of order. He called for holding an inquiry into the matter before it spiraled out of control.

Wazir Shakil, another lawmaker, agreed with his colleague’s observations and said that deforestation was also common in his area, adding that people responsible for it should be dealt with to the fullest extent



of the law.

Deputy Speaker Jamil Ahmed, who was conducting the session in the absence of the speaker, asked the Adviser on Forests, Aftab Haider, to conduct an inquiry into the matter and submit a report.

Flower exhibition kicks off at AAUR

Daily Times
Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

November 26, 2010

RAWALPINDI: A four-day autumn flower show 2010 was kicked off at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) on Thursday.

Agriculture University Faisalabad Vice Chancellor Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony. A variety of chrysanthemum flowers have been displayed in the exhibition and it is open for the general public.

In his address on the occasion, Prof Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan observed that Pakistan had a very fertile land, which was suitable for the production of plants and flowers, but little attention was paid to this sector so far. **"We can earn huge foreign exchange through export if we will pay serious attention to the industry," he said. He was of the view that there was a strong relation between plants and environment. "Our environment could only be clean if there are more plants," he added.**

The flower show, which will continue till November 28, is organised



by the PMAS-AAUR's Department of Horticulture in collaboration with National Horticulture Society of Pakistan so as to provide a platform to different organizations to show their expertise in the field of floriculture and provide healthy entertainment to the residents of twin cities.

Over 15 institutes including Capital Development Authority (CDA), Al-lama Iqbal Open University, CMH Rawalpindi, Islamabad Club, Air Force Headquarters, COMSATS Islamabad, Chaklala Cantonment Board, Institute for Landscape and Floriculture Rawalpindi, SPD, Bilal Farms and Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi are participating in the show. Over 70 students from various colleges, schools and institutes are taking part in flower arrangement and cut flower show.

Dr Khalid Mahmood Khan, the AAUR vice chancellor and Prof Dr Zakir Hussain, the Government College University Faisalabad vice chancellor were also present on the occasion.



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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.

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