

The misery of animals in India

Help comes step by step

India is a country with a very high population and also one of the poorest countries in the world. The misery of the animals doesn't interest anyone very much. Nevertheless there are some people who take care about abandoned, stray and ill-treated animals.

Holiday in India: impressive temples, magnificent palaces, beautiful women in colorful saris, but also a lot of poverty and animals living in misery.

My holiday luggage included also food for dogs and cats. Our first stop was Delhi. There I had already the possibility to give some of the food to emaciated dogs. They were very shy. When I threw the food towards them, at the first moment they run a bit away and after a little while they came back very hesitantly. Finally the dogs stayed with me when they found out there was something to eat. But as soon as a curious child approached, the dogs ran away immediately. Cats, I couldn't find at all.

Concern about animals is unknown

In Jaipur I distributed food as well among dogs wherever I saw some. On the way from Jaipur to Agra I saw a mule break down totally exhausted. The owner on his cartlet drove the animal before him at a gallop in spite of the hot weather (over 40C°). When the driver of our car stopped and we got out for help, a crowd of people came together in a very short time. They found it very strange that I was concerning so much about this mule. On our tour we also met a man with a bear he kept on a lead. Each time a car approached, he stepped on the street, pulling the animal behind him, intending the people to stop. The keeping of dancing bears is actually forbidden in India, the offenders can be punished with a fine or with jail up to five years.

Local Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

In Agra at the Fort, I found a young emaciated male dog with his sister. Feeding alone won't help much, so I decided to ask for a Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Surprisingly there existed one: People for Animals in Agra, an organization with about 200 members. Dr. Surat Prasad, the president of this organization, was ready to help immediately. I was really impressed by this efficiency and quick help. PFA Agra and the administration of the Fort agreed that the dogs which lived there would be fed regularly and castrated.

Drastic cases

While I was in Agra, this group was treating a bull which had been seriously injured by an axe, because he was on the wrong field. Among the patients was also a German Shepherd dog, abandoned by its owner. On the hind part of its body was a big wound open to the bones with maggots in it. They also looked after a young dog which could be saved at the last minute before three adult street dogs pulled him apart. Moreover they looked after seven donkeys which were almost burned to death by a neighbor, which felt annoyed by those animals. Also injured animals which are hit by cars and just left alone, are treated by them as well as possible.



Construction of an animal shelter

The organization PFA in Agra built some water-containers for the animals on different places in Agra and once a month they organize a free treatment day for the animals in the villages around Agra. Because it is very difficult to treat the animals successfully on the street – they move and sometimes can't be found anymore – PFA Agra decided to built an animal shelter in Agra.

After long negotiations with the authorities they finally got land for the shelter. Now the shelter is nearly finished – it can only be done step by step, because it depends on the financial situation. But besides this the main problem is of course the money to finance the daily costs of the shelter. As one can imagine donations are scarce, the poverty of the people is too great.



Mrs. Prasad gave me a book, written by Maneka Gandhi, the chairperson of People for Animals with an animal hospital in New Delhi. "Head and tails" describes the life of animals in India. I read it on my flight back from India to Germany and I was very shocked. Every year municipalities used to kill about 3 millions dogs very cruelly. As Maneka Gandhi told me, she brought this brutal treatment into court and won this case. A program was initiated with sterilization and immunization of the dogs around the country and with the support of different organizations for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. But even if some positive results could be reached, there are still people who maltreat dogs or feed them with poisoned meat, so that they die very painfully. Dogs are mostly annoying, are chased away and thrown stones at. They are hungry and must fight for every bit of food.

Cruel animal sacrifice

In her book, Mrs. Gandhi describes as well the killing of animals in the name of religion. As she says the sacrifice of animals in India is illegal under both state and central law, but it is still prevalent in many parts of the country. Foxes are trapped and mutilated (PFA has now been able to stop this), bulls are chased and tormented, and there are tribal rituals where wild animals are hunted. Four years ago she organized a workshop to train the animal movement to take action against these sacrifices. There has been some success to date.

Pedigree dogs are preferred

With the help of PFA Agra, I decided to adopt the emaciated young male dog from the Fort in Agra. When I went over to Delhi to take Indy with me to Berlin, he was left for one night at People for Animals in Delhi. I took this opportunity and visited the shelter and hospital from Mrs. Gandhi. You meet many kinds of animals over there: cattle's, horses, camels, some monkeys and of course dogs in all shapes and colors, and above all puppies. When they come

to the shelter the animals are in a desolate condition. Often they have sores with maggots in, which literally devour the animals. Many of these occupants have been hurt by accidents or have been ill-treated. The healthy and castrated dogs wait to be adopted, but this is not very easy in India. Ultimately they are released into the same area where they have been found and the local residents are informed about this action. Pedigree dogs, like German Shepherd, Doberman and German Spitz are also found in India. If somebody keeps a dog, then he prefers a pedigree.

Luck for Indy

In the meantime "Indy" has now been living about four years with me. He settled down wonderfully. By the way, when I went by taxi with him to the airport in Delhi, the driver asked me where I bought this beautiful dog and I told him: "I didn't buy him, he is a street dog. You just only have to look around: all of these dogs are beautiful, you only must treat them well."



PS: People for Animals in Agra need help in any way as much as possible.

For information, please contact:

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