



सत्यमेव जयते



ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Govt. of India

भारतीय जीव जन्तु कल्याण बोर्ड

(पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)

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CHAIRMAN

MESSAGE ON WORLD ANIMAL DAY – 4TH OCTOBER, 2016

I am happy to share with you that **World Animal Day** is celebrated on 4th October every year. On this day, animal life in all its forms is celebrated, and cultural events are planned all over the globe to sensitize the citizens about the importance of animals in our lives. It is also the feast day of Francis of Assisi, a nature lover and patron saint of animals and the environment. Numerous churches all over the world observe the Sunday closest to 4 October as a Blessing Day for the Animals.

However, World Animal Day has now gone beyond being the celebration of a Christian saint and is today observed by animal-lovers of all beliefs, nationalities and backgrounds. Animal rescue shelters hold fundraising events and wildlife groups organize information workshop with displays, schools undertake animal-related project work. Individuals and social groups donate to animal charities and some pledge to sponsor / support a sheltered animal.

ENVIRONMENT: Animals form an important component of our ecosystem that holds the balance between man and nature. Domestic animals, free living animals and wild animals each one has a specific role in sustaining the nature and ecosystem.

Contribution of Wild animals and birds in sustaining our natural forests: Many wild animals and birds prey on parasites that dent trees and erode plants. Animals produce (through respiration) carbon dioxide to enable photosynthesis. Animals like bees and birds help pollination, seed distribution etc. Herbivores limit uncontrolled plant growth; carnivores limit the herbivores from over-grazing the plant kingdom. India has perhaps one of the richest wild animal biodiversity.

Contribution of domesticated animals:-

1. Live-stock reared by individual household provides livelihoods and companionship and indulgence to family especially the women and children. In India animals are part of the life style and livelihood for the rural poor and small farmers.
2. Animals provide companionship to children. There is a good scope to introduce animals in Orphanages where the 'one to one care' is almost impossible. Grazing stock is a source of relaxation for rural children for whom, it is also a pleasant (stress free) activity.
3. Animals provide physical and mental support to differently able, epileptic and the blind providing them self worth by their *support and love*.
4. In the new social order, where both parents are forced to pursue career to run household, companion animals such as pet dogs play an important role by involving children and reducing their mental tension or behavioral aberration.
5. Animals provide companionship to the 70 million aged citizens who are 60 plus and for whom age is a, physical and mental handicap. For the old in rural India, live-stock, stray dogs and poultry are means for inter-action and companionship.

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6. **Animal waste (biomass)** reduces the soil abuse and restores its fertility from overuse of chemical fertilizers. It helps in retaining the precious water needed to sustain crops. Dung cake made of biomass is a major source of energy for cooking in most rural parts of India. Biomass produces Bio-energy (Bio-gas – green energy).
7. Animals provide mental diversion and an opportunity for **indulgence to soldiers recuperating** from serious war wounds. Soldiers left in company of army dogs are seen coming out of stress and depression of handicap and recover fast.
8. **Beefing up security and policing** - Animals like trained dogs, Horses, Camels & mules are used for beefing up the national security as well as they are used in riot control, chasing smugglers and in industrial security etc. NASA had been successfully using geese around space station for alerting dogs about any intrusion.
9. Animals are partners with man in relaxation, tourism, entertainment industry and sports. India's animal biodiversity is a major attraction to tourists of the west.
10. **Women and children consider animal rearing an enjoyable** and income providing endeavor that is manageable without disturbing other earning opportunities or domestic obligations. 70% of India's poultry is still reared in the backyards.
11. **ANIMALS ARE THE MAINSTAY OF BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH / EXPERIMENTATION: 70% of the Nobel laureates** in biology could serve the community through animal experiments. The scientific endeavor using animals for experimentation in India is controlled by CPCSEA insisting on refining, reducing and replacing animals used in experimentation.

In view of foregoing may I therefore request all animal lovers, animal welfare activists, NGOs and AWOs to spread the message of kindness and compassion towards animals and respect for life in a befitting manner as they contribute to *sustainability, food security, emotional security, livelihood and life support to millions, specially the old, differently able persons, small holders, weaker sections, women & children. The World Animal Day be celebrated by organizing public awareness camps in your respective locality / town and in the Society stressing on the importance of our companion animals and their share for the betterment of the world on the occasion of World Animal Day. Please do provide us with press clippings, Photos, videos of your activities of observance of World Animal Day on 4th October, 2016 so as to highlight them in our publications.*

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,


Maj. Gen. (Dr.) R. M. Kharb, AVSM (Retd.)
Chairman, AWBI