A PEEP INTO THE LAST LURKING LIVE RELICS OF TORTOISES IN HARYANA STATE IN INDIA

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(Accepted 24 November 2010)

ABSTRACT – Tortoises in India were abundant upto 1960s. Tortoises are in great peril today. The present studies have focused attention to understand the latest situation vis-à-vis TORTOISES’ in Haryana. The studies reveal that TORTOISES are today out from their once traditional habitats in rural ponds and Yamuna River. The tortoises could be procured by requesting school students, their parents for merely photography at a price of Rs.250/- to Rs.500 per specimen. Also, fish farming operations could provide TORTOISES for photography on friendly basis only. Today, most ponds have been converted to fish ponds and hence no tortoises. Few specimens procured belong to five species viz. Indian Peacock Soft Shell Turtle (Aspideretes hurum), Indian Black Turtle (Melanochelys trijuga), Asian Brown Turtle (Manouria eviys), Indian eyed Turtle (Mosenia petersia) and Narrow-headed soft-shelled Turtle (Chitra indica).

Tortoises are today on their extinction in next 4-5 years only. The Govt. of Haryana should necessarily constitute Tortoises conservation authority. The TORTOISE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY constituted thus, so first conduct a detail survey followed by in-situ conservation in few selected ponds. It will be rather encouraging if a TORTOISES SANCTUARY is designed in a traditional village pond, where, to the great fortune of tortoises, a vibrant population discovered by chance. Today tortoises in Haryana are live-relics on their total extinction sooner than later.

Key words : Tortoises, Haryana, Complete Extinction, Rural Ponds.