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Hasti-Chikitsa vinyan in the Garuḍa Purāṇa

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प्रस्तावना

According to Maharshi Yajnavalkya among the fourteen branches of knowledge the Purāṇa is the best.

“पुराण- न्याय-मीमांसा-धर्मशास्त्राङ्गमिश्रिताः।
वेदाः स्थानानि विद्यानं धर्मस्य च चतुर्दशः ॥”¹

The Purāṇa describes itself as ancient. From the Vedic period the scholars have mentioned the Purāṇa in their treatises. Even Veda, itself has indicated the description of Purāṇa. Vedas, Purāṇas, Brahmanas, epic etc. are flooded with information on animal care, health management and disease cure. Atharva Veda is a repository of traditional medicine including prescriptions for treatment of animal diseases.

Just like people, animals get sick sometimes. As a result, there is a field of animal science devoted to caring for all species called veterinary science. According to the Garuḍa Purāṇa animals received good medical care in ancient India. Physicians treating human beings were also trained in the care of animals. Indian medical treatises like Charaka samhita, Susruta samhita and Harita Samhita contain chapters or references about care of diseased as well as health of animals. There were, however physicians who specialized only in the care of animals or in one class of animals only; the greatest of them was shalihotra, first known veterinarian of the world and the father of Indian veterinary sciences. In Garuḍa purāṇa the art of taking care of horses is known as ‘Ashva-āyurvedā’ and the art of taking care of elephants is known as ‘Gaja-āyurvedā’. Similarly the art of taking care of cows is known as ‘Gou Ayurveda.’

Next in importance to cows was the horse. There is one mammal that transformed the world once its speed and power were harnessed. It is the first thing that allowed man to travel faster than his two legs could carry him on land. It is the creature that a few of us, as equestrians, know and appreciate in our current day lives. The unsung hero is the Horse Rakta-shrāva’ is a very common disease of horses. It can be cured through drinking the mix extract of ‘Nimba-patra’, ‘Patol’, ‘Tripholā’, ‘Khadir-kastha’ etc. If this mixture of juice we will give horses back to back three days it can also remove ‘kustho-roga’ of the horses. ‘Sarshapa-tela’ is an important ingredient of the horses’ pimples remedies. Garlic is also very needy things for horses.

“निम्बपत्रं पटोलञ्च त्रिफला खदिरं तथा ।

काथयित्वा ततो वाहं सूत्ररक्तं विचक्षणः ।

त्र्यहयमेव प्रदातव्यं हयकुष्ठोपशान्तये ॥”²

“सत्रशेषु च कुष्ठेषु तैलं सर्षपजं हितम् ।

लशुनादिकशषायाश्च पानभुक्त्यौपशान्तये ॥”³

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For Ārharitis (Battik-roga) use the mixture of Sugar, Ghee and Milky oil. For snivel, related diseases we can use 'katu-tailo' and for diarrhea (poittik- roga) use Trofala water.

“तैलेन वातिके रोगे शर्कराजापयोऽन्वितैः ।
कटुतैलैः कफे व्योधैः पित्ते त्रिफलावारिभिः ॥”⁴

For better nutrition of horses, always add milk with their food even if those foods are nutritious or fruitful or medicines. Milk makes that food more effective. Increasing of immunity power for diseases we should give them guduchi (flame lily or Guduchi plants), Shatavari (as piraguas recemousbot winter cherry), and Ashvagandhā's tenacious. These medicines protect them from many diseases. It is informed that four times daily are the best measure for this medicines, three times daily are medium and once in a day are worst measure.

“रोगयं पुष्टिदञ्चापि वल-तेजोविवर्द्धनम् ।
तदेवाशमाय दातव्यं क्षीरयुक्तमवापि वा ॥”⁵
“गुडुचीकल्कयोगेन शतावर्यश्वगन्धयोः ।
चत्वारि त्रीणि मध्यस्त जघनस्य पलानि हि ॥”⁶

Of the four-winged army, stated before, one was the elephant. This mighty and majestic animal, besides adding to the royal dignity and taking a prominent part in royal processions, served as a beast of burden, as mounts of kings in hunting excursions and as carriers of soldiers in battles. The importance of this animal led to the formulation of a systematic elephant-lore which deals with the maintenance and treatment of elephants.

“गजायुर्व्वदमाख्यासो उक्ताः कल्पाः गजे हिताः ।
गजे चातुर्गुणा मात्रा ताभिर्गजरुर्द्धनम् ॥”⁷

Whatever medicines are used for horses can also be used for elephants. But the dosage for elephants must be four times the dosage used for horses. If an elephant is all, feeding brahmanas and donating jewels and cows ensure quick recovery. It also helps to tie a garland around the elephants tusk and throw at it mustard seeds over which incantations have been chanted.

“गजोपसर्गव्याधीनामं शमनं शान्तिकर्म च ।
पूजयित्वा सुरान् विप्रान् रत्नैर्गा कपिलां ददेत् ॥”⁸
“दन्तिदन्तद्वये मालां निवद्धनीयादुपोहितोः ।
मन्त्रेण मन्त्रित्य वेद्यैर्वचा सिद्धार्यकास्तथा ॥”⁹

From the foregoing discussion, the brief review of the prehistoric developments in this area may be viewed as a window that reveals how the tradition of keeping animals is intimately connected to the ways of improvement of the quality of life, of people in the modern era. Love of animals and animal friendship is a feeling of affection that humans often have towards non-human beings, such as animals.

Humans share special bonds of loyalty and love with their animals and pets. Animals show humans affection as they receive it.

This is my proposed paper on Hasti-chikitsa vigyan in the Garuḍa purāṇa.

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