



RISING STARS

'Make It Green'

By Sumaiya Andaleeb

What exactly is a jungle? Well, everyone knows it's warm, damp and green. Most of us think of it as a steaming, shadowy place with undergrowth so densely entangled as to make it impenetrable.

Actually the forest floor, which receives very little sunshine, is quite easy to walk through. This is because jungles can usually be divided into three layers of vegetation, with tall trees as high as 60m forming a roof at the very top; a middle layer of shorter trees and a shrub layer of short plants, leaving the floor relatively free of obstructing branches and leaves.

Tropical rain-forests cover almost 7% of the Earth's surface. The largest is the Amazon rain-forest in South America. It covers almost seven million square kilometres and supplies us with a great part of the oxygen in the air we breathe!

Other famous jungles are the Ituri Forest in Zaïre, Africa

and the Sarawak rain-forests in Malaysia.

You are, no doubt, aware of the fact that these beautiful rain-forests which house so many species of fascinating animals and more than 80% of the world's insect species are disappearing rapidly as huge areas are being destroyed EVERY DAY.

One reason for this is that tropical hardwood — like teak, mahogany and ebony are in great demand for reasons which become obvious if you take a good look around you.

Money can be made from chopping down trees to make paper. Some areas are cleared to make room for houses, roads, farms and factories for people who are settled in cleared jungle areas, while the true inhabitants are driven away from the land that had been their's for generations.

Wildlife is threatened too, some with extinction. These include orang-utans, jaguars

and gorillas — animals which once freely lived in their home, the rain-forest. Now, as their numbers slide downhill, I wonder whether they will be around till the next century — only 9 years away. Will my great grandchildren ever see these? Or will they just be pictures in books and filmed on tape with perhaps two or three lonely species surviving in a zoo?

On the forest floor are other wild animals — deer, antelopes, tapirs, wild boars — which all eat roots or leaves and fruit which have fallen from the trees to the ground.

What will they eat if we cut down their main source of food? More importantly, where will they live? These animals are being herded together in one small area as we cut down more and more trees to satisfy our own need and greed.

Where has all our greed led us to? Global warming, the Greenhouse Effect, catas-



— Sumaiya Andaleeb

trophic cyclones, disastrous floods and famines, destructive earthquakes — you fill in the rest.

The destruction of the rain-forest is affecting us. We have ignored the problem for far too long. It is time for us to wake

up. Why don't you start by planting a tree in your backyard today? And make the planet green again.

Cox's Bazar — The Dwelling of Mother Nature

By Maria Irene

Very few people in this World do not feel the need to travel. Travelling in itself is relaxation and fun; but it also reveals to us the beauty, assets and attractions — even drawbacks of Worlds we have never experienced before. Through travelling one can really learn of other people — and their lives. London, Paris and Italy are great for luxurious holidays, sure, — but hey, one should never forget one's own country! Seeing and understanding our own country better, will enable us to understand ourselves better.

One of the most popular tourist spots in our country is Cox's Bazar. To get to the bottom right away it would of course be true to say the greatest attraction is 'the sea'. The endless blue-green sea of unknown depth caressed by the gentle, smoky, whiteness of foam — have never failed to touch the hearts of even those who have not a jot of interest in Mother Nature. Feeling ill? The fresh cool salty air is the perfect cure. Fed-up of stuffy, busy city life? A day of lolling in the sun will relax your nerves and refresh your mind, like nothing will. Suffering from depression? A beautiful beach-sunset will fill your heart with joy and beauty..... and so endless are the gifts of the lovely blue-green sea.

Numerous motels and restaurants have sprung up in Cox's Bazar recently. With excellent room service, delicious sea food, spacious television lounges and their very own exclusive beaches, the motels are more than satisfactory.

Sometimes the guests get together for small homely barbecues under the open starry sky to while away a long evening in perfect merriment; what more could you ask for? The motels are situated pretty much near the beach, so that guests have no transport problems in getting there.

There are various tribes here of many different cultures and ways, that make Bangladesh one of the most tradition-possessed countries in the World.

A visit to Cox's Bazar is incomplete when unaccompanied by visits to Heemchari, Teknaaf and the Naaf river. A perfectly enjoyable on hour drive down the beach will take you to Heemchari a Spot of picturesque beauty. Rolling green hills, bubbling brooks, lovely small water falls surrounded by huge rocks and boulders, protected by the cool shade of ancient trees — the place is an artist's dream.

Heemchari is an ideal spot for a picnic — refreshing, bathed in the sheer beauty of Nature that will instantly bring cheer to your day.

As for Teknaaf — its inhabitants are almost all Burmese.

The fascinating Burmese culture dwell here — one should see for himself. The Burmese market is the main object of tourist interest. The small shops clustered together consist of their traditional goods — wrap-around skirts of Burmese print, certain types of facial soaps hand made by them, hand-made pickles, dried fish and so on. It is a great sight seeing spot.

Naaf river is one of the most beautiful in Bangladesh. And the most exciting fact is that, standing at the river shore, Burma can be seen on the opposite bank — its dry fields and small houses almost like those of our own country. What a wonder! Watching a foreign country from our own! The late afternoon sun on the clear water arouses in it a shining silver glaze, and all around is the exotic greenery of trees and shrubs of various kinds. Oh its a lovely sensation!

Cox's Bazar is a sensational tourist spot, encased in a halo of breath taking natural beauty. The diverse cultures, and numerous traditions fascinate the tourists, apart from the lovely sight seeing spots and of course the beautiful sea beach. Starting from efforts like comfortable arrangements for staying, even the salty air shouts a welcome to the tourist!

Bet You Didn't Know

Environmentally-conscious people curse chemicals, plastics, industry — but do you know that some of these actually help the environment? For example,

*Plastics may be more difficult to recycle than other materials, but without them more trees would have been destroyed to make paper for packaging.

* Because modern cars have more plastic parts, they are lighter, so they use less fuel and cause less pollution.

* Without plastic there

would be 150% more rubbish. Some plastics can be recycled and when they are burnt, they can produce as much energy as petrol.

* Because of advances in the chemical industry, you can now expect to live twice as long as you would have a century ago.

* Quite a few big industrial companies are trying to find substitutes for gases which add to the Greenhouse Effect. So we now use ozone-friendly pesticides and hair-sprays. HURRAH!

In God's country

By Naheed Kamal

Let me tell you what I think of cigarettes; when someone lights up a cigarette its saying to everyone around us that: 'You matter so little to me that I don't care if you can't breathe. Die if you want. I'm lighting up!' Not a courteous habit, smoking. Not something you do around people you like. The same goes for all the exhaust emitting cars and fume exhaling industries all over the place. They are all saying to us and the planet: 'Die if you want!' But I am of course one of those liberal types and I go into a fit if ever I hear of someone losing their freedom of choice. I am all for freedom of speech, action, and the press, too. I have nothing against anyone who enjoys smoking and polluting. Not every one on this planet is environmentally aware.

Breathing in polluted air is definitely bad for us, that is by now an established fact. We are all aware that all the pollution flying, floating, and swimming around us will eventually kill us. But do we ever stop to think about what exactly we are doing and how we can put an end to it. At least part of the time, during the day the air we breathe is unhealthy. For years we have been warned about acid air, acid rain and how they poison our forests, lakes, and destroys the wildlife. They do not however stop at that and have extremely harmful effects on the human respiratory system. The very balance of the earth's environment is being threatened. Does this fact stop us from abusing the planet? The answer is a definite No!

Acid air is a major problem for all urban areas. It is formed

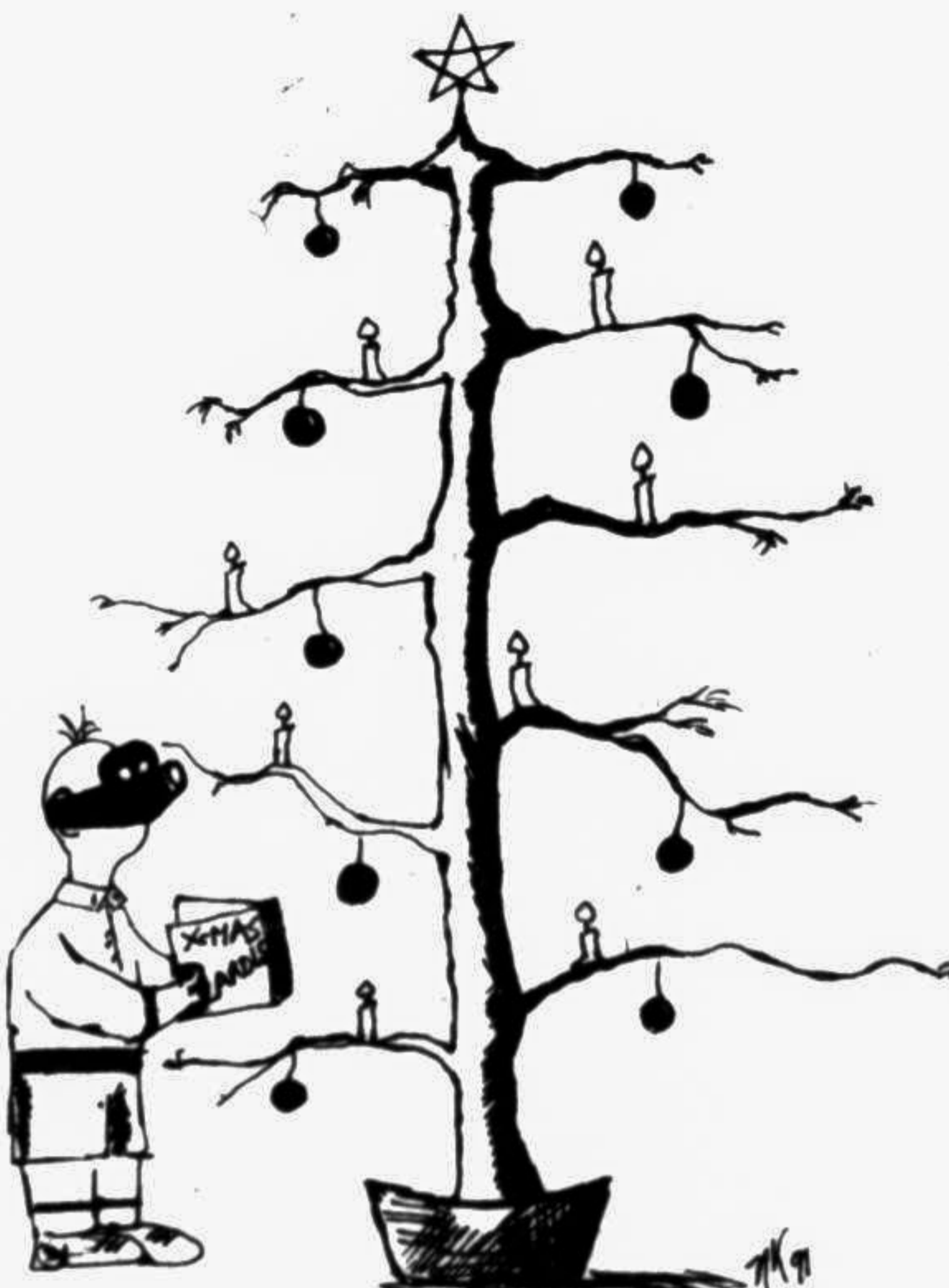
when sulphur dioxides and nitrogen oxides are released into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels. These are then transformed into sulfuric and nitric acids by means of a chemical reaction triggered by sunlight and warm tempera-

tures. On a hot day acid aerosol concentrations tend to be highest. This invisible aerosol mist can travel great distances with the wind, away from its origin and source. It hovers over urban areas as well as rural areas.

This acid air mostly effects the respiratory system. Fine acid particles can penetrate the deepest, most delicate tissues to in-flame the respiratory tract tissues and constrict the air passages. Asthmatics are badly effected by acid air as well as children who play out doors a long time. People who work and exercise outside during the day are also likely to be affected. Working and exercising increases the amount of air being inhaled and so a greater amount of toxins is being inhaled. Health effects are even more pronounced when the acid air is accompanied by ozone in the lower atmosphere (not the 'ozone' in the upper atmosphere which is the protective layer that screens out the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun). The brownish haze often seen over urban areas is created when the ozone comes into contact with sunlight. This haze along with the acid air is considered to be the worst urban air pollutants. These toxins hamper the lungs' ability to clear themselves and so increases the risks of contracting respiratory infections.

In spite of various environmental programmes the air around us continues to be our major garbage dump, which we treat mindlessly. We do not seem to realize that by polluting the atmosphere we are poisoning the very air we breathe and destroying our life source.

God created the Earth in six days time, says the Bible, lets hope His own creation does not end up destroying 'God's country'.



Christmas Future? Naheed Kamal

'How I Would Change the World' ?

By Syed Nageeb Mustafa Ali

EVERY time I open the newspaper or watch the news on the television, I see violence and atrocities committed by man against man. How I wish I could change the world.

Human beings are the most intelligent species on earth, and a very ruthless and evil race. Man's intelligence has brought tremendous technological progress to the world and has helped man reach the moon and far into outer space. But man is also dishonest, greedy, intolerant, conceited, corrupt and ruthless. He has destroyed the earth with drugs, guns and grenades. For money, man will do anything. For some, money is more important than even their family

As you can see, the world needs to be changed and there are many things we could do. First, I would tell the people about love. Love and tolerance towards each other is essential to make this world change. Children have to be taught, at home, to be kind and polite. The effects of this will touch everyone in the world.

The Earth is made up of poor countries and rich countries. The majority of the world's population lives in the poor countries. These countries have to be helped so that the Earth will not be sad and unequal anymore. Starvation

and poverty, infant mortality and unemployment have to be wiped out. So, I would appeal to the rich countries to help me. If there is enough love in the hearts of the people, I am sure everyone would come forward. I would establish funds to tackle each specific problem. I would open child care centres and free schools and make education compulsory for everyone. Nursing homes for old people and food centres for the needy would be built. I would arrange to distribute old clothes and toys from the rich countries to the poor countries. I would ask the countries to help build shelters for the homeless people and free hospitals for the sick.

Movies showing violence and crime would be banned. People would have to respect the police and law. Criminals would have to face sever punishments. I would ban guns and all weapons used in war. Nuclear energy will only be used for peaceful purposes.

I would also make people take care of the environment. This is for the good of our own health and the Earth would also be saved. I would also ban CFCs.

I am sure all of you would join me in changing the present conditions and making the world a wonderful place to live in. — Age-13 years.

Of Fur And Men

By Adib Rizwan Pasha

A step back in time — 2 million years. A man armed with stone weapons runs after an animal. Soon the animal is dead, its flesh burned and eaten, its fur dried and used as clothing. A two million year step forward in time to the present, a furry animal runs free in one of the few jungles that remain. It falls unwittingly into a human-laid trap. Soon it is dead, later its fur has been used to make an expensive coat draped over the shoulders of some glamorous lady.

Two animals have died. The caveman had no choice. The animal was a means of survival. But the modern man did.

Fur has been worn since prehistoric times, since the caveman first wrapped himself with it to keep warm. More recently, it was the last word in chic — no one could be fashion-

able. The trapping itself accounts for 25 million deaths each year. A trap is made of saw tooth edged steel plates which are prised apart and left in the ground when an animal, which indeed may not be fur coated at all, steps on to it, the trap snaps shut. Trapping inflicts maximum pain, worsened by the animals struggling to free itself. If a trapper finds an animal still alive, he kills it either by standing on its throat or by clubbing it on the head.

And there are fur farms. Wild mink and fox are bred in artificial conditions until they are six months old, then they are killed en masse. But these animals are hardly given a life in the first place. They live in tiny cells and often develop 'cage madness', they continue to pace up and down in the same place and become cannibal-



— Wafiqul Hasab

ionable without it. But at what cost? It takes up to forty animals to make a single fur coat, that is forty needless deaths for one, single item of clothing.

The damage that is being done: Each year 100 million animals are slaughtered in the name of fashion, that is an incredible 2000 animals per 15 minutes. Many of these are near extinction, and many more, the sea mink to name just one, have already died out forever. Even the common beaver was very nearly driven to extinction, it survives still merely because its fur just happened to go out of vogue. Today there are just 500 snow leopards left in the world. A few decades ago there were thousands, yet another victim.

The deaths: Animals which are hunted for their fur are never shot. The reason is not that hunters think that killing by a gun is merciless, it is because bullet holes in the pelt would greatly reduce its cost. The animals are rather caught and then gassed or electro-

bals. They are finally killed, either by a lethal injection, or by gassing using car exhausts or electrocution by wires running into their bodies from car batteries.

Over forty million animals are raised and killed this way each year, it is a sad but lucrative business.

What can be done: In theory, at least it is exceedingly simple — stop buying furs and eventually this business will die out. In the environment conscious 90's there has been, awakening, a turn for the better. The public has started taking notice. Almost eighty per cent of people think it is morally wrong to wear fur. Famous personalities ranging from Bros, to Yaamin le Bon to Princess Diana have campaigned against fur. Important anti-fur organisations such as Lynx and SPCA have recently redoubled their efforts for the protection of endangered animals. Everyone is beginning to take notice. Better late than never. But what can you do? The next time you see fur coat in a shop, just leave it.

RIDDLES

Here are some more riddles from all over the world for you to solve:

- (1) A clever little craftsman Who builds houses without bricks, White walls without windows, Which after dismantling can all become clothes. — China
- (2) What is that which we swallow and live, but when it swallows us, we die. — Thailand
- (3) The tree is too low to climb; It has swords that can't be used to hack, A hundred noses it has, yet it can't smell, And it has a bat that can't be used to bat. — Malaysia
- (4) Big creatures can get in, but Not ! The tiny ones cannot. — Japan
- (5) What is it that is seen better as it grows darker? — Rep. of Korea
- (6) When it was young (small) it wore a skirt; When it was old (big) it was naked. — Philippines

Credit: Laughing Together, Asia/Pacific Copublication Series 8ix.

Answers to September 4th's puzzles are: 1. NOTHING TO IT. The paragraph does not contain a single 'e', but

every other letter of the alphabet.

2. RIDDLES Why is a crossword puzzle like a quarrel? — Because one word leads to another. Why are riddles that cannot be answered like a man disappointed by his visitors? — Because there is a host put out and not one guessed. Why is a bad cold like a great humiliation? — Because it brings even a great man to his 'sneeze'! What occurs once in a minute, twice in a moment, but not once in a hundred years? — The letter M.

11. The 12 countries are:

- 1) China
- 2) Yemen
- 3) Crete
- 4) Italy
- 5) Nepal
- 6) Sudan
- 7) United States
- 8) Guatemala
- 9) Greenland
- 10) Algeria
- 11) Surinam
- 12) Israel

Answers to lastweek's Test Your Word Bank:

1. B. a charge
2. D. repulsive
3. B. scold
4. B. of hearing
5. B. cut off
6. D. complicated whole
7. A. gradual development
8. B. find fault with
9. C. punish
10. D. prosperous

Black Rhinoceros

In Kenya poachers slashed the black rhinoceros population from about 20,000 in 1970 to just 330 in 1986. Since then, the numbers have begun to climb, thanks to a wildlife program that established nine sanctuaries to breed the remaining rhinos. The program hopes to transfer many of the animals to Kenya's Tsavo National Park, which once held more than 6,000 rhinos and is now home to about 30. So far only two rhinos have been moved to Tsavo. If they survive, 10 more will be transferred in the next two years, and by the year 2000 Kenya's black rhino population could reach 700.

