

# Four Takhi horses transported from Prague Zoo

## Mongolia's Takhi population now reaches nearly 400



Czech military plane transporting four Takhi horses landing in Bulgan Soum of Khovd Aimag

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On July 2, four Takhi wild horses were transported from Prague (Czech Republic) by military plane to Mongolia. They first landed in Bulgan Soum of Khovd Aimag and were then brought to Takhi steppe in Gobi-Altai Aimag by a specially prepared lorry vehicle.

When the Takhi horses were received, our reporter made a telephone call to N. Enkhsaikhan, Manager of the International Takhi Group. He said the following: "We have just received four male Takhi horses of 3 to 5 years. The transportation was successful. This is the third Takhi transportation from the Prague Zoo. Transportation continued for 18 hours, passing through Kazan and Novosibirsk cities in the Russia and landing in Bulgan Soum of Khovd Aimag. Everything was normal when the horses passed the border and when they underwent the customs and veterinary examination.

We expect to spend 8-9 hours to bring the Takhi horses to the Takhi steppe and travel roughly 200 km. A veterinarian of the Prague Zoo, the director, vice director, representatives of the Czech Development Agency (CzDA), Khovd aimag authority, and eminent environmentalist and honored member of the International Takhi Group O. Dorjraa and I are now ready to move to the Takhi to the steppe. Four Takhi horses are being loaded for transportation. No more Takhi horses will be brought from Prague this year. Nothing has been discussed about next year's plan. In the future, Takhi horses, according to the initiative of the Office of the President, are supposed to be raised in Japan and then brought to Mongolia. Unfortunately, 49 Takhi horses died in during the severe dzud of 2010 in the Takhi steppe of Gobi-Altai province, but nevertheless, the population of these wild horses with the young stock is reaching more than 90 today," said Enkhsaikhan.

The project of saving Takhi horses and acclimatizing them in their native land is being implemented for the 3rd year within the scope of the Czech Republic and the Mongolian Development Cooperation. The project contributes to local development. Since 2011, the state-run Czech Development Agency, responsible for the operation of the international development cooperation of Czech Republic, has spent about USD350,000. The total donations made by other partners, sponsors, the Prague Zoo, Czech Environmental Ministry and individuals reached USD87,000. Four Takhi horses were transported for acclimatization in Khomyn Tal steppe in 2011 and more four Takhi horses were brought to Takhiin Tal steppe in 2012. Some male horses were successfully acclimatized in their native place and gave birth to

young animals. The guard building, car parking, grass store house were built in the B-zone of the Gobi reservation or as it is called the Takhi steppe. Additionally, the reservation place has been supplied with medicine and medical utensils, radio station, and the local bagh medical building has been restored.

One of the important parts of the project is to support the social and economic situation of the people working and living on the Takhi reservation. With an aim to protect and safeguard nature and the environment, the project envisaged to facilitate the work of environmentalists. In association with other international donor organizations the project managers help local people and herders develop other sources of income such as developing small crafts, tourism, etc. Within the project, the local community is working to set up a women's cooperative this year so they will be able to build a small bakery and develop handicraft art.

The Takhi horse known as

"Przewalski horse is one of the rare species of wild horses that survived in the world in the 20th Century. In the 1960s, their species was mercilessly annihilated, the last Takhi horse was observed in late 1968 in Zuungari Gobi. After the Przewalski trip, the Takhi foals were transported several times from Mongolia to European zoos. The population of those young foals has now increased totaling 1800 head in zoos of different countries.

The farms engages in breeding Takhi horses and individuals have welcomed the initiative to bring Takhi horses to their native place for acclimatization. The first group of Takhi horses was brought to Khustain Nuruu of Tuv Aimag and the Takhiin Tal steppe for acclimatization in 1992. Later in 2004, the third project on Takhi acclimatization took place in Khomyn Tal steppe. As a result of 20 years efforts, the number of Takhi in Mongolia is reaching 400 today.

To grow Takhi population further, make the Takhi accustomed to native land and environment, protect and



Carefully offloading the horse containers onto a truck

safeguard the Takhi habitat becomes imperative not only for the foreign donating organizations but also for the local community and Mongolian citizens.

The Prague Zoo played a significant role in saving and protecting Mongolian Takhi horses. For the third year, the Prague Zoo has successfully organized transportation of the Takhi horses to Mongolia, improving the Takhi Horse herd structure. The successful transportation of Takhi horses to Mongolia has been performed with financial support of

the Prague Zoo, of other supporting agencies, the defense agency aviation and the Czech Development Agency. Mongolian photographers joined the transportation in cooperation with the 'Hunnu Air' company.

On July 2, D. Zemberellham, Mongolia's Ambassador to the Czech Republic participated in the ceremony of transporting four Takhi horses from Kbely airport and held a press conference for the project, 'Acclimatization and protection of Takhi Horses in Mongolia'.



Takhi horse sets foot on his native Mongolia for the first time



Specially prepared vehicles transport the horses 200 km to the Takhi steppe