

# Traditional livestock healer

## STATE AWARD

**Becharbhai Dosabhai Parmar** is a highly revered person in Rampur of Banaskantha district, Gujarat. Villagers rush to him for help particularly when any animal in the village suffers from some ailment. The *pashu vaid* (vet healer) is much in demand for almost any veterinary problem. Eighty year old Becharbhai, as he is affectionately known, can be banked upon to attend even complicated cases that formal vets find beyond their expertise. His family consists of his wife, five sons and three daughters. One of his sons is serving in CRPF. Two are involved in farming and the remaining two live in Ahmedabad.

### The renowned Pashu Vaid

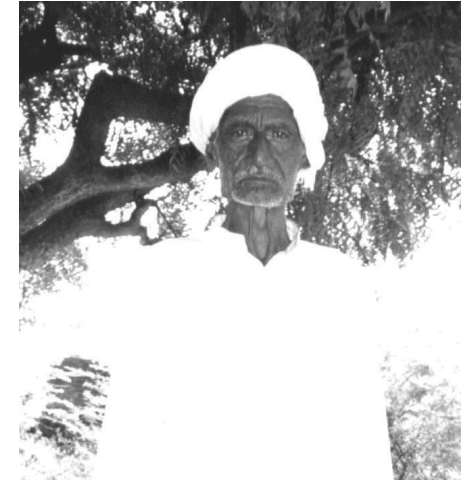
Becharbhai has, for the past 55 years, been practicing traditional veterinary medicine in about 60 villages in Patan, Siddhpur and Deesa talukas. Becharbhai states that he did not learn the science of healing animals from any individual. He acquired his expertise through his observation and understanding. He is adept at treating fractured limbs of any animal. Whatever be the kind of fracture, he gets the animal up on its feet in a very short time. He also treats diseases like polio, paralysis, bloat, tumour, retention of placenta, horn cancer, prolapse of uterus, maggot infestation in wounds abnormal foetal position and problematic pregnancy/calving. The most remarkable thing about him is that he never charges for his services. The client just needs to arrange for his transportation.

### Testimonials

Most farmers of the area vouch for the efficacy of Becharbhai's treatment; they have absolute faith in the traditional remedies practiced by this *pashu vaid* and are usually satisfied with the resultant quick cure.

A farmer in Becharbhai's village relates an incident. A bullock had once swallowed a heavy metal object. A qualified veterinarian was called in and he recommended surgery but pleaded his inability to perform it. The next day, Becharbhai was called to attend to the animal. He fed the animal with a traditional herbal mixture and when the object stabilized at one place within the body, he removed it effortlessly. Several others in the village confirm this story.

Nathabhai Rabari of Genefaru village in Patan district recounts another case: Becharbhai had once come to treat his bullock for sprain. The farmer also showed him another bullock that he had purchased recently. This bullock ailed from swelling all over its body. Becharbhai told the farmer that it might get cured by itself but asked to be called if it happened again. After a month, the bullock developed swelling again and Becharbhai was promptly called and he removed an iron nail from the bullock's stomach, curing the animal of the problem.



### Address

Vill: Samo, Nana Rampura  
Tal: Disa, Banaskantha  
Gujarat

### Scouted by

Pravin Rohit



### Some Outstanding Traditional Knowledge practices for treating ailing animals

#### Fracture in Animals

Whenever an animal breaks a leg, Becharbhai observes the level of damage carefully and puts the bone in proper position. Then the following treatment is done. An ointment is prepared from ash of banti (*Echinochloa frumentacea*) (100 g), navsar (ammonium chloride) (8 g) and castor oil (*Ricinus communis*) (100 g). This is applied on the affected part which needs to be subsequently bandaged using cotton gauge. Bamboo/cane strips are used in the bandage for support and stability. After tying the bandage, the remaining paste is smeared on it. After eight days, the bandage needs to be replaced and the same method and proportion of medicine are repeated. In 15-20 days, the fracture is healed. Becharbhai also insists that a tetanus toxoid injection be taken, when the injury is made by an iron implement or if the animal is weak.



### Bruises on the thighs caused by thrashing with barbed wire or by hitting with an iron rod

Mix *kapur* (camphor - *Cinnamomum camphora*) (one small packet); groundnut oil (*Arachis hypogaea*) (100 ml) and water (25 ml) well. Extract juice of 250 *thor* (*Euphorbia nivulia*) leaves and add ash (250 g); *navsar* (ammonium chloride) (10 g) and clay (100 g). Mix well and add a pinch of common salt. Press the mixture, knotted in a piece of cloth, onto the wound or inject into the area of the wound. Also treat the affected area by placing a cloth pad, dipped in warm salt water, for seven days. Apply this paste from the eighth day onwards onto the wound for two days. The wound must be flushed with moderately hot water.

#### Retention of placenta

Mix jaggery (unrefined cane sugar lumps)(500 g), *sejal* (*Triumfetta rotundifolia*)(2-4 tiny branches ground into fine paste) and water (1litre). Within one hour of oral administration of the mixture, the animal will eject the placenta.

#### Prolapsed uterus

Thoroughly crush indigenous variety of onion (*Allium cepa*) (500 g) and add water (one litre). Filter the mixture with muslin cloth and add groundnut oil (50 g). Clean the surrounding area with the liquid and push the prolapsed uterus gently in. Boil rice (2 kg), add ghee (250 g) and feed it in the morning. Boil coarsely ground black gram (*Vigna mungo*) (2 kg), add butter oil (250 g) and feed it in the evening. Feed the animal with the preparation for two days. This helps in the formation of new muscle cells.

#### Alternate remedy

The ailing animal is given a mixture of Himmat powder (a small variety of myrobalam-if no powder is available, the fruit should be pounded) (10 g), coarse powder of Urad seed coat (*Phaseolus radiata*)(1 kg) and Groundnut oil (250 g). If groundnut is not used, de-oiled sesame cake (1 kg) should be used. This mixture should be administered daily till about 10 kg of black gram, 100g of Himmat powder and 2 kg of groundnut

oil are provided. Once the course is completed the ailment is cured.

#### **Bloat**

Ground ajmo (Bishop's weed-*Trachyspermum ammi*) (50 g) is mixed with juice of 1 kg of lemon and water (1litre). Once the animal drinks the mixture, its condition will improve within 15-20 minutes. Then feed jaggery (500 g) dissolved in water.

#### **Intoxication**

Groundnut oil (1 kg) and 'ijmet' (*Menthol*) 2-3 g are mixed together and fed once to the animal. With a single dose, the animal is generally cured.

#### **Abscess in throat**

The healer operates on the abscess and removes it. Then he applies the milky extract of cactus thor (*Euphorbia neriifolia*) on the cut made on the affected part. Such use prevents rapid closure of the cut and allows all the putrefaction to bleed out. This also prevents the wound from becoming septic. Then he uses an ointment prepared from ash of *banti* (*Echinochloa frumentacea*) (100 g), navsar (ammonium chloride) (8 g) and castor oil (100 g). This is then applied on the operated part. This paste is applied on the cut made previously and this is done for three days.

#### **Ingestion of metallic object**

Extract juice of Bijoru (Citron- *Citrus maxima*)(500 g) and add jaggery (500 g) dissolved in water. Feed the mixture to the animal twice a day for four days. The foreign object will then stop moving within the animal's body and will stay put in one place. Then it has to be taken out through surgery

#### **Maggot infestation in wounds**

Sometimes maggots develop in the wound when the wound is not treated properly. For curing this, an ointment is made from tobacco (100 g), castor oil (100 g) and *navsar* or ammonium chloride (25 g). These ingredients are mixed well and this is applied on the wound with the help of a cotton plug. The maggots get killed by a single application of the ointment.

#### **Worms in wounds in cattle**

Worms sometimes develop in improperly treated wounds or injuries. For the treatment a homogenous mixture of smoking tobacco (100g), castor oil (100g) and Salamonic (25 g) is used. Cotton soaked in the mixture is placed on the wound and changed from time to time.

#### **Ectoparasites (lice and ticks)**

Mustard oil (*Brassica campestris*)(50 g) and a pinch of navsar (*ammonium chloride*) (5 g) are mixed together and massaged on the skin for controlling lice and ticks. The ectoparasites will fall off the animal. According to Becharbhai if the Ammonium Chloride is replaced with black soot of cooking stove (about 25 to 30g), it also gives good results.

#### **Horn Cancer**

The horn affected by cancer is removed by cutting and the wound is cleaned. Then castor oil (100 g), navasar (Ammonium chloride) (10 g) and ash of 'banti' (*Echinochloa frumentacea*) (100 g) are mixed and this ointment is applied on the wound and a bandage is tied. This is removed after five days and a fresh bandage is applied which is removed after 10 days.

#### **Valo (Fever due to Rhabado virus)**

Add *ajmo*/Ajwain (*Trachyspermum ammi*), (50 g), jaggery( 50 g) and *ijmate* (*menthol*), (10 g) to cold water (1litre) and mix well. Feed this mixture to the animal.

#### **Three day fever/Ephemeral fever**

The animal suffering from Ephemeral fever becomes loose limbed, its body feels feverish and the skin becomes dark. For this make a mixture by adding Ajwain (*Trachyspermum ammi*) (50 g), jaggery( 50 g) and *ijmate* (*menthol*)(10 g) to cold water (1litre). This mixture is fed to the animal once a day for two days.

#### **Intestinal worms in calves**

According to the healer, when a young calf is born, it should not be given colostrum immediately. First it should be given groundnut oil (50 g) to which powdered

black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) (50 g) has been added, to prevent infestation of tape worm and only after this should *khira* or animal colostrum be given. Groundnut oil (100 g) and black pepper (50 g) are again given to the calves when they are two to three months old. Thus two to three doses of oil and black pepper are given to the young calf by the time it reaches the age of six months.

#### **Paralysis of hoof**

The bone of the hoof is like rubber. If a powerful blow

is given to it, the veins get damaged, the blood circulation stops and clotting happens. Due to this, the hoof cannot be moved. The animal limps while walking and the upper part of the hoof loses its shining skin. Camphor (1 piece) is crushed finely and mixed well with groundnut oil (100g). This mixture is then injected to the hoof and massaging is done. The injection is given only once. After this injection, warm salt water is poured on the hoof and this is massaged on the hoof. This treatment is continued for seven days.