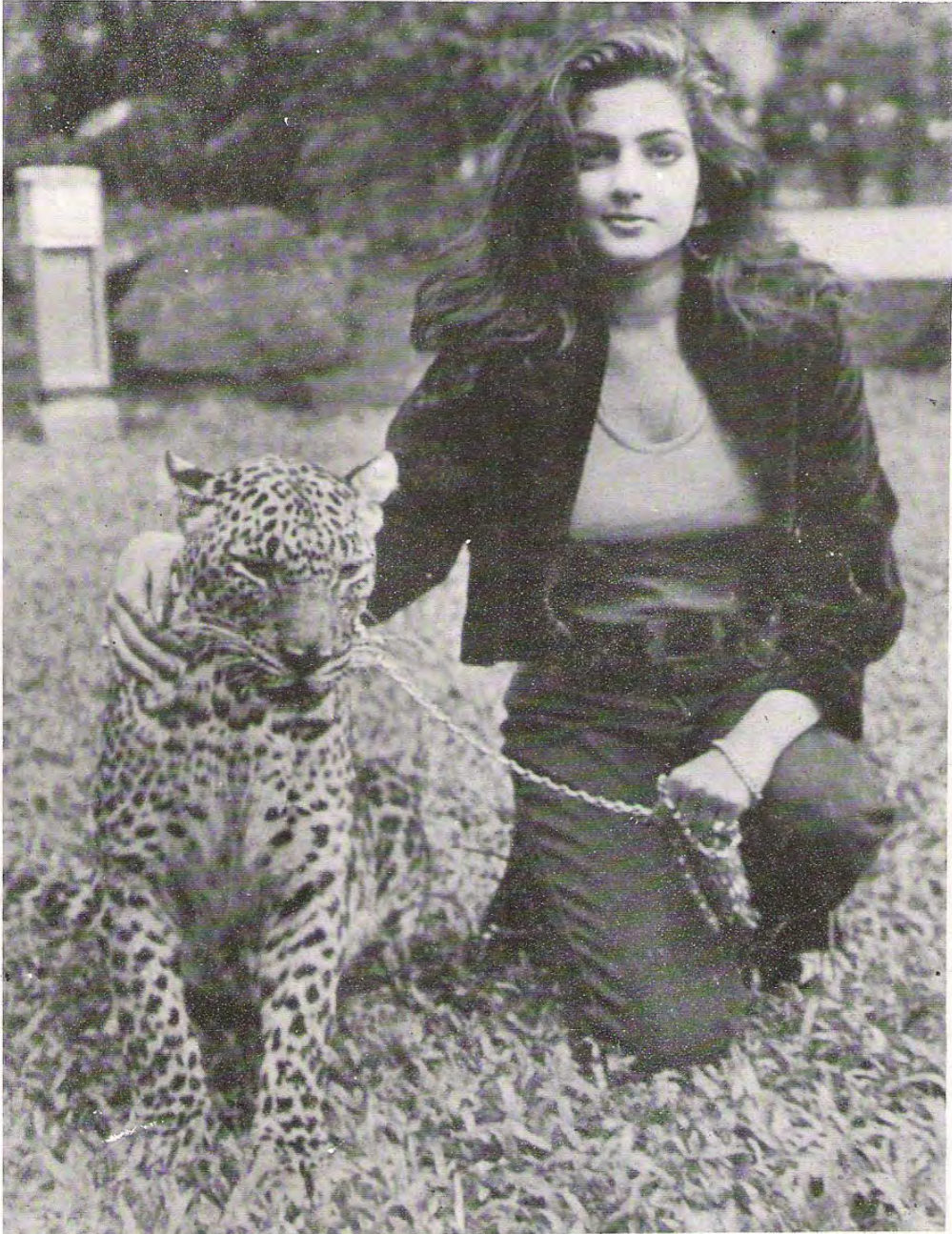


COMPASSIONATE FRIEND



JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY INDIA



Photographer : Mahendra Parekh

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Beauty Without Cruelty

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Beauty Without Cruelty

is a way of life
which causes no creature
of land, or sea or air,
terror, torture or death.

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The Rt. Hon'ble Muriel, Lady Dowding

News Release

London, November 22, 1993.

It was with sadness that BWCC (Beauty Without Cruelty Charity) heard of the death of its founder Muriel, Lady Dowding, at the weekend.

Lady Dowding founded Beauty Without Cruelty Charity in 1959 because of her growing concern for animal welfare. In 1957 she joined the Council of the National Anti-Vivisection Society and through that became interested in encouraging the development of alternative methods of testing and producing cruelty-free products. A confirmed vegetarian she became interested in finding sources of animal-free cosmetics and toiletries which were not tested on animals.

In the late 1950s two things happened which seemed to have prompted Lady Dowding to take action. Firstly, her second husband, Air-Chief Marshall Lord Dowding heard a report from Dr Harry Lillie, surgeon to the whaling fleet about the sickening death of a pregnant blue whale, shot with nine harpoons and taking five hours to die, simply to provide ingredients for the cosmetic industry (apparently, even the crew were sickened).

The second factor was her attendance at a spiritualist association meeting (Lady Dowding was also a spiritualist) attended by ladies in fur coats, she said, "spiritualists tend to talk a lot about vibrations and I began to wonder what must have been the vibrations of terror and suffering, emanating from the skins of those animals".

Following that, she got together with a group of friends and organised a fashion show in London featuring fake fur coats. This was repeated up and down the

country and the Beauty Without Cruelty movement was founded.

In 1963 she established, with the help of Kathleen Long, a small range of cruelty-free cosmetics (now BWC plc.). They set up boutiques in London and elsewhere to provide people with a cruelty-free alternative.

BWCC's director, Kate Black explained: "BWCC (Beauty Without Cruelty Charity) separated from the cosmetics company in 1980 and no longer receives any funds from BWC plc. But the charity still carries on the work begun by Lady Dowding. BWCC campaigns for cruelty-free fashion and beauty and against all forms of cruelty to animals for the sake of fashion and vanity and will continue this work for as long as we have the funds to do so".



COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

From Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India, October - March 1994

Beauty Without Cruelty Founder
The Lady Dowding

Kathleen Albino

My sister, Muriel, has a deceptively calm appearance. Behind her feminine exterior, the immaculate grooming, the smooth, fair skin and soft hands, there is a strong and forceful personality. She is a natural leader and organiser. She is also a courageous fighter for any cause that touches her loyal heart. Audiences who watch her opening a fete or speaking about Beauty Without Cruelty, our responsibility towards animals, or some kindred subject, may get the impression that her life is easy and that during a pleasant day she has enjoyed coming to their Society to talk. This is because she is poised, she smiles easily and has a quick appreciation of a humorous quirk or situation. She is very sociable and loves meeting people, but she still finds speaking to a large and perhaps critical audience a strain. Public speaking has been forced on her, and because of her determination to oppose cruelty towards animals and to lift some of the burden of their suffering, she has overcome her dread of this and has developed into a fluent speaker (she never uses notes) relaxed, and without mannerisms, her voice is quiet, but clearly audible.

As a matter of fact Muriel's well-organised day sometimes includes as many as five engagements. It starts at seven a.m. when the post arrives, and it may be the small hours the following morning before she gets to bed. With her husband's failing health even that short night is often disturbed. Despite valiant efforts to organise her life each day is chaotically full. Beauty Without Cruelty is in itself a full-time occupation. She is also Chairman of the National Anti-Vivisection Society and a Trustee of the Lawson Tait Memorial Fund, and she works for other animal welfare societies in which she is interested. To add

to all this there is a dramatic fatality about the way things happen to her, and around her. Chance meetings are always resulting in some new project, some new activity.

She once said with a sigh: "So many people write to me suggesting I should start this, or do that. If they only knew what my life is like". So many people know Muriel: She is imaginative and warm-hearted and accepts other people's burdens, getting involved in their personal problems, and, of course, their animal's problems too. So the telephone is always ringing, and her post looks like Christmas every day.

The nucleus of Muriel's world is her husband and her family. This includes her own son, his wife and baby daughter, and her step-son and his wife and two fast growing-up step-grandsons. The young people come down to Tunbridge Wells many weekends.

My mother and I have many unexpected little treats now that we share the same house, for my sister must always give pleasure. She is a born home-maker. If things were not beautiful around her, and the house not charming, orderly and running on oiled wheels, she could not work as she does or stand the strain of such long busy days.

There has always been a religious and spiritual background to Muriel's life. Our pretty mother was brought up in a Protestant, strict Victorian household. Our father came from a devout Roman Catholic family. Most of his brothers and sisters were accepted into the Church as priests and nuns, but he rebelled, ran away from home and eventually became an authority on antique silver. When he met Mother she was acting as Mayoress for Grandpa, and longing to escape from parental domination. Against strong family opposition they married.

Muriel was born on a bitterly cold March day, in London. Children were not allowed to walk long distances in those days and were accompanied by prams and smartly uniformed nannies until they were four or

five years old. But as a tiny child my sister danced. There were two tragedies in her young life. She lost a dog and a kitten, and started to ask what happened to people and animals when they died. Nannie called it, "Morbid!" she then found a picture in a book of the soul leaving the body and being guided by an angel towards heaven. This she considered most beautiful, and she took the book everywhere she went. She also saw fairies and talked about them to everyone.

For some reason, perhaps convenience, her first school was Mr. Thomas' School for the Sons of Gentlemen, in Porchester Terrace. Here she had rather an unpleasant start, until the boys discovered that she could run fast, and was small enough to push through holes in hedges in a terrifying game called, "Caesar!"

When Muriel was eight our parents separated, and later were divorced. We went to live with some friends of the family. In our new home there were five or six Pekingese dogs, a bloodhound, an aviary of birds in the garden, a cow, and two pet lambs, not to mention the bantam that was supposed to lay eggs, but crowed and pecked our legs instead. "Uncle", as we called him, was a Jew. Through him Muriel contacted the Jewish faith. She went, again rather inappropriately, to a boarding school for missionaries' daughters, and from there to a convent school

At fifteen Muriel was asked to decide whether she wished to stay with the kind friends who had cared for her for so long, or return to Mother. "Uncle" wished to send her abroad to finish her education, and then present her at court, whilst Mother, since the divorce, had been living quietly, with very little money, in a small seaside town. Muriel returned to Mother. For my sister the choice was inevitable, and the result was that Mother, who was much in advance of her era, being a theosophist,

a spiritual healer and an astrologer, gave Muriel a sound foundation of spiritual knowledge that has moulded her character.

Lessons with a governess took the place of school, when Muriel began a hard and severe training in ballet, and all forms of dancing; she excelled particularly in classical Greek dancing as her movements were naturally smooth and graceful. She passed all her examinations and became a teacher in a dancing academy. The grubby backstage of the local theatre repelled her, and she had no wish to go on the stage. This was fortunate as it would have displeased Grandfather and other members of the family.

Muriel grew into a happy, gay girl. She had so many boy friends there were times, when, like the old woman in the shoe, she didn't know what to do! She had a beautiful fat horse to ride, and she enjoyed teaching dancing. She was still seeking knowledge of what happened to people and animals when they died, and from the age of about fifteen followed spiritual teachings. By this time Muriel had been influenced by the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths, and knew quite a lot about Theosophy and Spiritualism. This rather Catholic upbringing gave her tolerance and a breadth of understanding that in later years was to prove invaluable.

During this period Grandfather died, and material conditions became easier for Mother, who eventually remarried and moved to Tunbridge Wells. Mother went to hear Mr. Simpson of "The Seekers" when he came to speak in Tunbridge Wells. She volunteered to start a prayer circle in her home, and trained as a healer with "The Seekers". Muriel became interested in absent healing too, and went to Theosophical meetings when possible.

In due course Muriel married one of her many boy friends. He was charming. His name was Max Whiting. Max was jovial, but serious enough to know all about prayer circles and spiritual healing. When she started her own absent healing circle Max was interested, but most of their

friends thought it a little strange.

After the birth of their only child, David, Muriel nearly died. Max telegraphed for Mother, who came and healed her. It was at this time that Muriel first attempted to become a vegetarian. She felt that it was the ideal way of life for her and the little boy. But war broke out, and with many changes of home, food rationing and no knowledge of what vegetarians ate, or how to get the right substitutes, she was not able to become a complete vegetarian until war ended.

Max joined the R.A.F., and during his third tour of operations in a Lancaster bomber he was killed. But this death was not confirmed until 1946.

In the meantime Muriel's Father-in-law had given her and David "Oakgates" where Muriel was to remain for twenty-one years – until the recent move. It also became the home of her second husband, and later the Beauty Without Cruelty office.

At "Oakgates", Muriel read books on occult subjects, started another absent healing circle, sat on a rescue circle and acted as lecture-secretary for the local theosophical society. She took in numerous "strays". I remember there were thirteen animals in the house when she and Lord Dowding returned home after their wedding. This must have surprised him as most of them were frightened of men and had made themselves scarce on his visits.

Her marriage to this great and wise man, who is truly "the love of her life", has taught her much. It has meant more than the happiness of shared beliefs and the same sense of humour. From him she has learnt the importance of integrity, and developed the strength of character to do what has to be done *always*. She can say the unpleasant thing when it is necessary, and she tries hard to concentrate on essentials, as he does, and ignore the irrelevant. Although they are both interested in occult

and spiritual matters, what rally concerns them is the appalling suffering in the world, particularly that inflicted on animals.

About two years after they were married Lord Dowding investigated the conditions in slaughter houses prior to an appeal in the House of Lords. As a result of this investigation he became a vegetarian.

Then Muriel became ill again. She had a very serious operation and was on the "danger list" in hospital for many weeks. During a convalescence of over a year she grew increasingly concerned with the suffering of animals.

"What we must remember is that we are the nearest to God that the animals know", she once said. "How would we feel if God and the angels turned on us, and hunted and killed and tortured us? We are intended to be their guardians and teachers, drawing forth their love and intelligence, not their slaughterers and torturers".

Muriel believes in "Karma", the law of cause and effect. She fears that while we keep killing animals and each other we must suffer for it in wars and disasters, in death, disease and destruction. "While we keep killing, killing, killing, how can we hope for peace?" she asks.

Muriel has many friends who share with her this sense of duty and responsibility to younger forms of life, humanitarians who will not cease to protest and where possible oppose the cruelties in such despicable forms that are inflicted on the creatures of land, sea and air. Closest to her in this are the members of the Beauty Without Cruelty Council.

Since Beauty Without Cruelty was founded eight years ago a noticeable trend away from cruelty has begun in this country. It is an encouragement to greater efforts and greater responsibilities. Muriel knows how much must be done. Her husband, who is a very wise man, is confident that she will fulfil her destiny, and see at least some of the happy results of her efforts.

Courtesy : COMPASSION Winter 1967

Foxed!

Articles about barbaric fox sacrifices in villages of Mysore District to celebrate the Makara Sankranti festival which appeared in newspapers during mid-January 1994 brought in a great number of letters from animal lovers.

BWC had in 1992, with the help of the Karnataka Police and State Forest Department foiled the sacrifices and the authorities had assured that they would never re-occur. Our Chairperson therefore wrote to the Chief Conservator of Forests who replied that he had seen the article in the "Deccan Herald" in time and as he had alerted the concerned officers the same day, no sacrifice took place in the villages mentioned, nor had they taken place for the last two years.

BWC was further relieved to read in "India Today" that as the villagers were unable to hunt (find) foxes for the sacrifices they are rather foxed!

Ban on display of Ivory

All trade in Ivory, whether of Indian or African origin, whether exported or sold for internal use, has been totally banned since the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 1991, came into force two years ago.

The few hundred persons who trade in ivory illegally have never felt it necessary to trade clandestinely, but have openly been displaying their "unlimited" ivory stocks in the hope that they can go on and on selling the goods to foreigners.

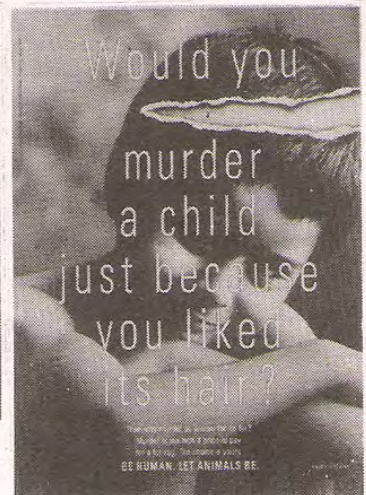
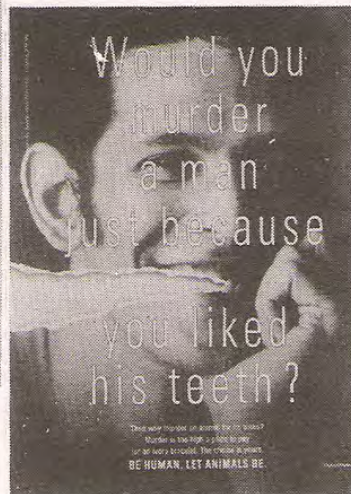
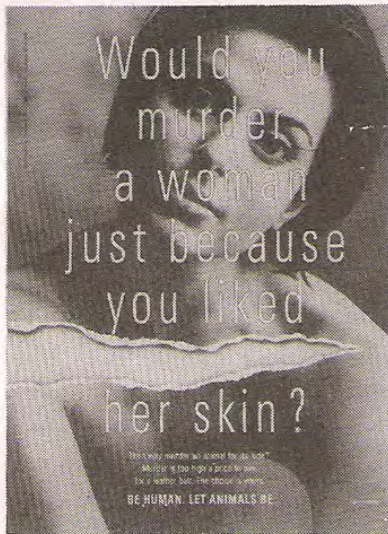
On 27th October, 1993, the High Court banned the display of ivory (raw and carved of whatever origin) stating that whoever possesses it should keep it in a room locked and sealed. Hopefully the Government will now no longer continue to look the other way...

Would you Murder...?

BWC is most grateful to the famous advertising company Ogilvy & Mather who have thoughtfully undertaken a public service campaign based on **BWC** ideals.

The set of three advertisements have theme starting "Would you murder..."

BWC plans to effectively make use of these designs as posters and handbills.



COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

From Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India, October - March 1994

Animal Rites

S. Balakrishnan

On August 27 at 11.00am Gitaben Shah, a 36-year old animal rights activist, finished cooking for her family. After a hurried lunch, she left her house located in the congested Mandvi-ni-pole area in the walled city of Ahmedabad, on patrol duty. Gitaben was accompanied by a 23-year-old activist, Hitesh Patel. This was a daily routine. Patrolling the city and its outskirts, either in a hired autorickshaw or in a jeep, for several hours at a stretch in search of cattle being illegally brought into the city either for butchering or for onward despatch to the abattoir in Deonar, Bombay.

Near Sarangpur Kothirang, she spotted a pick-up van loaded with six calves. She stopped it and marched the driver to the nearby Astodia police station to lodge a complaint. Later she took the calves to the Ambavadi panjrapole (cattleshed) and resumed her patrolling.

When the autorickshaw in which she was travelling approached C N Vidyalaya, Ambavadi, a scooterist blocked her way. Before she realised what was happening, the scooterist and his accomplice, pulled her out of the vehicle, whipped out knives and stabbed her brutally 18 times. Hitesh Patel, who was with her, rushed to her rescue, but he too was attacked.

A constable and an inspector who were passing by, however, nabbed Mohammed Salim Ibrahim and Javed Bhura, the alleged assailants, while Hitesh rushed the bleeding Gitaben to the V S Hospital. But she died before admission.

A fearless crusader for the defence of animals was silenced. Ahmedabad (population 40 lakhs) protested with a near-total bandh.

The city was aghast over the viciousness of the attack. Said her husband and a co-

activist of the Akhil Bharatiya Hinsa Nivaran Sangh, Bacchubhai Shah, (42): "The murder may appear to be spontaneous, but in reality it was the result of a well-planned conspiracy. Gita and her colleagues had received murder threats several times in the past".

For the past eight years, Gitaben had been campaigning against the slaughter of animals. But since there was no ban on the killing of animals, she concentrated her attention on the illegal trade in animals and their butchering. She struggled valiantly for the rigorous implementation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

In 1986, the Gujarat government appointed her as an honorary inspector under this Act, which redoubled her enthusiasm to fight for the mute creatures. She formed a dedicated team of volunteers and launched a peaceful war on the tormentors of animals.

A student of St. Xavier's College, Bombay, animal defence became an obsession with her. Her associates claim that she had rescued about 1.50 lakh animals. They recalled how, on September 8, 1990, she received information about the illegal transportation of a trainload of bullocks. She intercepted the train at Sabarmati and rescued all the animals. In June, 1991, she rescued 4,000 cows at Amreli. She complained to the police and municipal authorities against illegal slaughterhouses.

Her activities were spread all over Gujarat. In the past, several religious leaders and Gandhians had campaigned against the slaughter of animals, especially that of cows. But, they were unable to sustain their campaign. In sharp contrast, Gitaben's crusade was a continuous affair, which was beginning to affect the multi-crore trade in meat and leather.

According to Hitesh Patel, several prominent butchers and traders had offered to pay a regular hafta (bribe) to Gitaben. Shah too confirmed this. He confessed that his wife was offered a bungalow, Rs. 3,000 every month, plus grocery and other provisions

for the entire family. But she spurned the offer. Thus, a conspiracy was hatched to eliminate her. He mentions one Baba Khan, a man wanted in connection with the murder, as one of the persons who had warned Gitaben of dire consequences.

She had made several representations to the Ahmedabad police and to the Gujarat government seeking protection. But, in vain. Even Maneka Gandhi, the prominent animal rights activist, had urged the Gujarat Chief Minister, Chimanbhai Patel, to ensure Gitaben's safety. But, the authorities did not respond. This is surprising because Gitaben herself had political connections. She was a close associate of Ashok Bhatt, MLA, and the high-profile president of the Ahmedabad unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Nonetheless, L K Advani was among the first to rush to her residence and offer condolence to the bereaved family.

According to Shah, Gita and he were members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). "We had both campaigned for the BJP in the last Lok Sabha and assembly elections: Gitaben's detractors allege that she was vehemently opposing the butchers because the latter were Muslims. Nayanbhai Shah, an associate of Gitaben, however, rejects this charge. He claimed that Gitaben could count several Muslims as her friends. "She was a social worker who helped people, irrespective of caste or creed", Nayanbhai added.

Sources in the Special Branch of Ahmedabad police confirmed that Gitaben was not involved in communal incidents. The Special Branch had not viewed her campaign as a communal crusade. Since Hindus in Gujarat were not generally involved in the slaughter of animals or traded in "their" skins, the industry was dominated by Muslims. "We would have carried on with our campaign even if the industry was dominated by Hindus. In any

case, why should we not be entitled to our political convictions just because we are fighting for animals? If we had political ambitions we would not be fighting for the animals who do not have voting rights", Shah observed.

The murder of Gitaben has sent shockwaves across Gujarat with several religious leaders condemning the incident. But will it result in a crackdown on illegal cattle trade and slaughter? The answer is a big 'No'. This is because the stakes involved in this business run into several crores and in a state where corruption has scaled Himalayan heights, it is surely like asking for the sun.

Courtesy : THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY

It took the life of a young lady for the Government to fulfil her desire to save cattle from the butchers' knives.

On 23rd September, 1993, within less than a month of the gruesome murder of Gitaben, the Gujarat State Government through an Ordinance imposed a total ban on the Slaughter of cow and its progeny.

The Ordinance provides for punishment of six months imprisonment or fine up to Rs. 1000/= or both for violating the order. The ban has been welcomed by a great number of persons, religious and animal rights voluntary organisations, even though it is only a minor extension of the existing order prohibiting in the State slaughter of cows and calves of any age, and bulls and bullocks above the age of sixteen (could be slaughtered only if a non-utility certificate from a Vet was given).

The total ban will now mean that no cow, calf, bull or bullock can be certified fit for slaughter under any circumstances. Panjrapoles will need to take care of old animals. And most important the Gujarat Government will need to take steps to ensure that such animals are not smuggled out of the State to be killed in some other State's abattoir.

Reel Cruelty

Iqbal Malik and Vincent van Ross

Cinegoers might be thrilled to see the Hindi film heroine Mamta Kulkarni featuring with a leopard in *Betaj Badshah* (releasing soon). But, what they may not realise, is the pain the leopard had to suffer in order to make this possible. The leopard's mouth was obviously stitched before the shooting.

Beauty Without Cruelty, an international animal rights organisation, appealed to the Board of Film Certification to censor the leopard scene as the leopard was subjected to cruel treatment for screening this sequence. This appeal was based on the December 6, 1991 government notification under "The Cinematograph Act, directing the Board of Film Certification to ensure that scenes "showing cruelty to, or abuse of animals, are not presented needlessly".

The Board of Film Certification is, however, reluctant to do anything about this. Going by the rule book, it apparently takes "cognizance of visuals of cruelty as seen on the screen only." In effect, what this means is: the Board will censor only that part of the film which actually shows cruelty to animals on the screen. That the leopard had suffered severe pain during the stitching of its mouth to make it safe for its human co-star, is of little consequence to the Board.

Irrespective of whether the mouth-stitching operation is shown on the screen or not, the fact is that an act of cruelty was committed. It hardly matters whether cruelty was committed on the screen or off the screen. The point is, the animal in question was subjected to cruelty with the sole purpose of making the animal safe for its co-stars while performing its role in the film. If these scenes are censored, it will automatically discourage film-producers and directors from going in for scenes which involve cruelty to animals (even if it is off-the-screen). In fact, that is the best way to ensure this.

Perhaps the animal that suffered most for the silver screen was the tigress Uma Devi. She dominated the animal starrers featuring in over 600 films. For a fight sequence with the silver screen macho Dharmendra in *Insaaf Kaun Karega*, Uma Devi was starved for three days. And, her mouth was stitched regularly for six days (sometimes twice a day for retakes). After the fight, people rushed to Dharmendra to congratulate him on fighting the stitched-up tigress.

Here is the other side of the story, Rev. Richard Lane Smith, a film critic, who witnessed the gory ritual of making Uma Devi safe for the shooting published his eye-witness account of the incident. To give you an idea about what goes on behind-the-scenes, we reproduce his eye-witness account.

"Uma Devi's claws have been cut down to the very roots. Any new nail growth is cut away mercilessly just before a shooting, just in case she swipes at an actor, director or cameraman.

He described the stitching up operation, thus: "while in this small cage, stout nylon ropes are passed around Uma's head and neck and pulled on by four or five men till the beast's mouth is pressed up against the bar in a vine-like grip. No tranquilisers or sedations, she has to remain lively for shooting".

The man (Govindrajan who owned the tigress) with the nylon twine and the 'awl' moves quickly. Quite literally, he uses a shoemaker's awl and with the same stitch the mocha uses to repair your sandals, Uma Devi's lips are sewn together, top lip to bottom lip.

Ten or 12 stitches around the entire mouth and each time the awl pierces the lip, the blood spurts and is daubed with a cloth.

Stitching done, the head is gradually allowed to slacken away from the bars and the tigress sits in pain, drooling saliva and blood, panting unable to lick its lips and sadly aware that any attempt at opening its jaws is excruciating.

Producer K. C. Bokadia had to cough up Rs. 1 lakh as fine for this act of cruelty towards the tigress Uma Devi in production of this film

Insaaf Kaun Karega. But, that does not, in any way, alleviate the pain and suffering of the animal.

This was in 1987. Several animal rights organisations started a crusade for Uma Devi's freedom. But, death overtook her freedom in 1988 bringing to an end her painful film career spanning nearly a quarter of a century.

Most of the animal starrers have proved smash hits in the box office. This has led to increasing use (and abuse) of animals in films. Animals are climbing up popularity charts for many reasons. They can be counted on to come up with new stunts and tricks everytime. And, they can also be used to manipulate the motions of the audience.

The tricks and stunts these animals perform are, by no means, a part of their natural behaviour. Hence, they have to be trained to perform these tricks. The process of training animals to perform feats of entertainment is cruel and painful. Animals are made to perform out of fear of torture or hunger, or, both.

Animal celebrities are loaned to film producers against fabulous payments by animal trainers who maintain their private zoos. Prominent amongst them is Govindrajan of Madras, who owned the unfortunate Uma Devi.

Political clout, money-power (there is big money in loaning animals) and strong backing from the film industry render animal trainers slippery for law enforcement agencies and animal rights organisations.

But, that is not the only problem. The bureaucracy is so obsessed with the rule book that it is reluctant to use its discretion in tackling animal rights violations from the standpoint of fair judgement. Therefore, the law needs to be spelt out in clear and unequivocal terms. Only then can defaulters be checked, at least by conscientious law enforcement officials.

Realising the futility of the situation, Mrs. Maneka Gandhi took keen interest in the

matter when she was the Minister of State for Environment and Forests. She recommended 54 humane guidelines for use of animals in films to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1990 for consideration. What happened to those recommendations?

For most animals, the difference between their real life and the so-called glamorous "reel" life is the pain inflicted by human beings to make them perform according to the will of their trainers. Before they hit the silver screen, the animals (particularly wild animals) are invariably made "safe" for the human beings starring in these movies. They are, therefore, disarmed. What it means is that they could end up losing their fangs, claws, or, they might have their mouths stitched.

In order to prevent accidental damage to human stars, the animals starring in the movies are often deliberately maimed. Sometimes, this causes permanent damage to them. Unfortunately, all this cruelty and torture behind the "reel" performance fails to evoke the sympathy of the Film Censor Board. They still take cognizance of visuals of cruelty to animals as seen on the screen only.

Isn't this "reel cruelty"?

Courtesy : THE HINDUSTAN TIMES.

Beauty Without Cruelty (India Branch) sent legal notices to the Central Board of Film Certification and the Producer and others connected with the filming of "Betaj Badshah".

The Union Minister of Environment & Forests, Shri Kamal Nath immediately ordered an inquiry into the matter.

At the time of printing, attempts continue to be made by those concerned to prove that no cruelty to the leopard has occurred. Believing otherwise, **BWC** will not rest...

Shahtoosh - King of Wool

Ashok Kumar

The Chiru *Pantholops hodgsoni* is an antelope which is found in treeless elevations above 5000 m in Tibet and in areas of northwest India bordering Tibet. Chiru wool, known as shahtoosh (king of wool), has long been prized for its extraordinary warmth and softness and has traditionally been used in the manufacture of shawls. It is so light that it is possible to pass a shahtoosh shawl through a finger ring. Although this species of antelope has been listed in Cites Appendix I since 1979, and is included in Schedule I of India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, which prohibits hunting and trade in this species, shahtoosh wool continues to be found in trade.

Today, the shahtoosh shawl is widely worn in northern India. Dr. G. Schaller has reported (in litt. to Dr B. Bunting, 20 February 1992) that Dharchula, situated in northwest Nepal on the border with India and a well-known frontier post for smuggling wildlife products into India, is a major trading post for shahtoosh wool; a family residing in this town is believed to be the biggest trader in this product. In New Delhi, the wool is sold to Kashmiri traders who send it to Srinagar, Kashmir for weaving (G. Schaller, pers. comm., February 1992). Here, the shawls are woven from pure shahtoosh, or a mixture of shahtoosh and wool from the domesticated Pashmina goat for a more durable and less expensive garment. Although the traders claim that the wool is collected from thorny bushes in which the Chiru has become entangled, in fact no such vegetation occurs in the species' habitat. Instead, the animal is hunted and killed in large numbers, with hunting pressure particularly high near the Chang Tang Reserve (Schaller, in litt. to Dr B. Bunting, 20 February 1992), which

was set up in late 1990 to protect Tibet's wildlife.

The average yield of wool per animal is said to be 150g. A fine of 500 Yuan (US\$90) which can be imposed for illegal hunting of this antelope, does not seem to be a deterrent; in late 1992, a researcher for TRAFFIC India reported the arrival from Tibet of 2000 kg of shahtoosh wool in Leh, Ladakh, and in Srinagar, Kashmir. The price of shahtoosh in 1992 was Rs.39,000 a kg (US\$1250) but dropped to Rs.16,000 a kg in early 1993. The reason for the drop in price is not fully understood but has been attributed to the political and financial instability in Kashmir which has prevented weavers from buying shahtoosh.

In February 1993, another researcher working for TRAFFIC India conducted a brief survey of the shops in New Delhi and found a total of 40 shahtoosh shawls in four shops; about half of these shawls were found in one shop, which is state-owned. Door-to-door Kashmiri salesmen are known to be selling shahtoosh shawls for companies, and the product is also sold privately by Kashmiris.

Women's shawls are generally 2m long and just under 1 m wide; men's shawls are between 2.5 m and 3 m in length and 1 m wide. The price depends upon the quality, colour, embroidery and size. The natural colour of the antelope's wool - beige, with white at the throat and on the belly - is the most popular. The lighter shades fetch the highest prices; white, generally meant for male use, is the most expensive; black, maroon, ruby and moss green colours are also seen. The researcher, a US citizen of Kashmiri extraction and fluent in the language, was offered a woman's shawl in beige for about Rs.20 000; the larger shawls were available at prices reaching Rs.50000. White shawls were not available at the time of the survey. Western buyers are quoted prices which range from between US\$3000 and US\$3500 (Schaller, in litt. to Dr. B. Bunting, 20 February 1992).

There has been no attempt to ranch the Chiru for its fur, as is the case with Vicuna Vicugna vicugna populations in Peru - a practice that has greatly alleviated the pressure on wild populations of this species. However, Schaller is of the view that such an experiment would spell disaster for this species as there are too few animals to use for capture and captive breeding, and he urges a complete ban in this trade (G. Schaller, pers., comm., May 1993), in accordance with international and national legislation.

In early June 1993, and following concern expressed by Schaller to the authorities about the continuing trade in this product, Indian Customs officers at Delhi airport seized a consignment of 105 kg of wool believed to be shahtoosh arriving by air from Kathmandu, Nepal; samples are currently being forensically examined. There have also been reports of shahtoosh being smuggled from India into Italy.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Dr George B. Schaller who supplied the initial information to TRAFFIC India, and to the two field researchers who wish not to be named.

Courtesy : TRAFFIC BULLETIN

Wool Seized

New Delhi, February 4 : For the first time, a large quantity of smuggled shatoosh, regarded as the finest wool in the world, valued at about Rs. 8 crores has been seized by customs officials here, reports PTI.

The record seizure of about 400 kg. of shatoosh, obtained only by killing wild Tibetan antelope, besides 3,000 kg of pashmina was the result of a painstaking surveillance on two godowns in Lawrence Road in north Delhi, customs collector, Mr. Anand Bordia, told reporters yesterday.

Courtesy : THE TIMES OF INDIA.

Customs cleared

Aditi Kapoor

New Delhi, January 27.

A consignment of "shahtoosh", imported illegally from Nepal in the name of Sonam Norbu of the Dalai Lama's administration-in-exile in May last, was reportedly cleared by the customs at Indira Gandhi International Airport soon after.

The consignment was supposed to be in the safe custody of the Customs authorities while the Ministry of Environment and Forests got a sample of the consignment tested. The sample was later identified as 'shahtoosh'. Trade in 'shahtoosh' is banned under the international wildlife trade laws.

Mr. Anand Bodia, city Customs Collector, told the TOINS yesterday that he is unaware of the status of the consignment. He said he has asked for a report on the consignment. "The report should be ready in a day or two", he said.

The consignment, weighing 1.07 quintals was brought here by Mr. Atup Lata and Mr. Pema Tsering Lama via a consignment note dated May 27, 1993. According to experts, the raw material, when manufactured into shawls, could fetch Rs. 3 crores in the domestic market and Rs. 8 crores in the international market.

Mr. Bordia said the two consignors were not detained by the Customs authority at the time of the import because the correct identify of the material was then not known.

'Shahtoosh' is the world's finest wool obtained from the Tibetan antelope which is a Class one protected species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). India is a signatory to CITES.

The illegal consignment was detected by the Customs in May last. It was then reportedly, cleared on July 29. A sample of the consignment, marked 'pashmina', had been sent by the Ministry to the Fish and Wildlife Department in the United States for correct identification. It was only in August that the Ministry received a letter from the US confirming the material to be 'shahtoosh' and banned for trade under CITES.

Courtesy : THE TIMES OF INDIA

No Place For Pets To Be In

Jayshree Shah

At Crawford Market's pet bazaar you can buy any creature from the humblest lovebirds to the most exotic Siamese cats, brought in from all parts of the country. Here they lie cooped up in dark cages - a traumatic experience for the to-be pets and their potential buyers.

Life is quite miserable for them. But they cannot speak of their sorry state nor complain about their plight. These are the birds and animals huddled in the pet shops at Crawford Market. Caged and confined in cramped crowded conditions till some animal lover or street show performer buys them.

This is the mustiest section of the market which houses 18 pet shops, owned by dealers who have been carrying on the trade begun by their forefathers. Here one can buy fish of various types, pigeons, Indian parakeets, love-birds, munias, cats, dogs, ducks, turkeys, turtles, mice and other colourful and cute pets.

The surroundings are not clean. The air is not fresh. Not enough sun-light filters in. Some birds are sickly looking, a dog lies in his narrow cage motionless and inert. The scene leaves you far from happy.

The birds are transported from Bangalore, Hyderabad and Madras by rail over long distances in suffocating conditions. Badly handled by the loaders, with insufficient food, water and air, the mortality rate goes up as high as 20 per cent in transit. Once or twice a month such packages are loaded off at the city's rail terminal. Captured from the forests or reared by private breeders, they find their way to the pet shops in Bombay.

The price of a pet sold at the Crawford Market varies, depending on the availability

and demand of the animal or bird. So while a pair of munias will cost Rs.10, a Siamese cat costs as much as Rs.2000. A young rabbit can be bought for Rs.40, black ducks cost Rs.60, while a fighter cock will cost Rs.500 to 600.

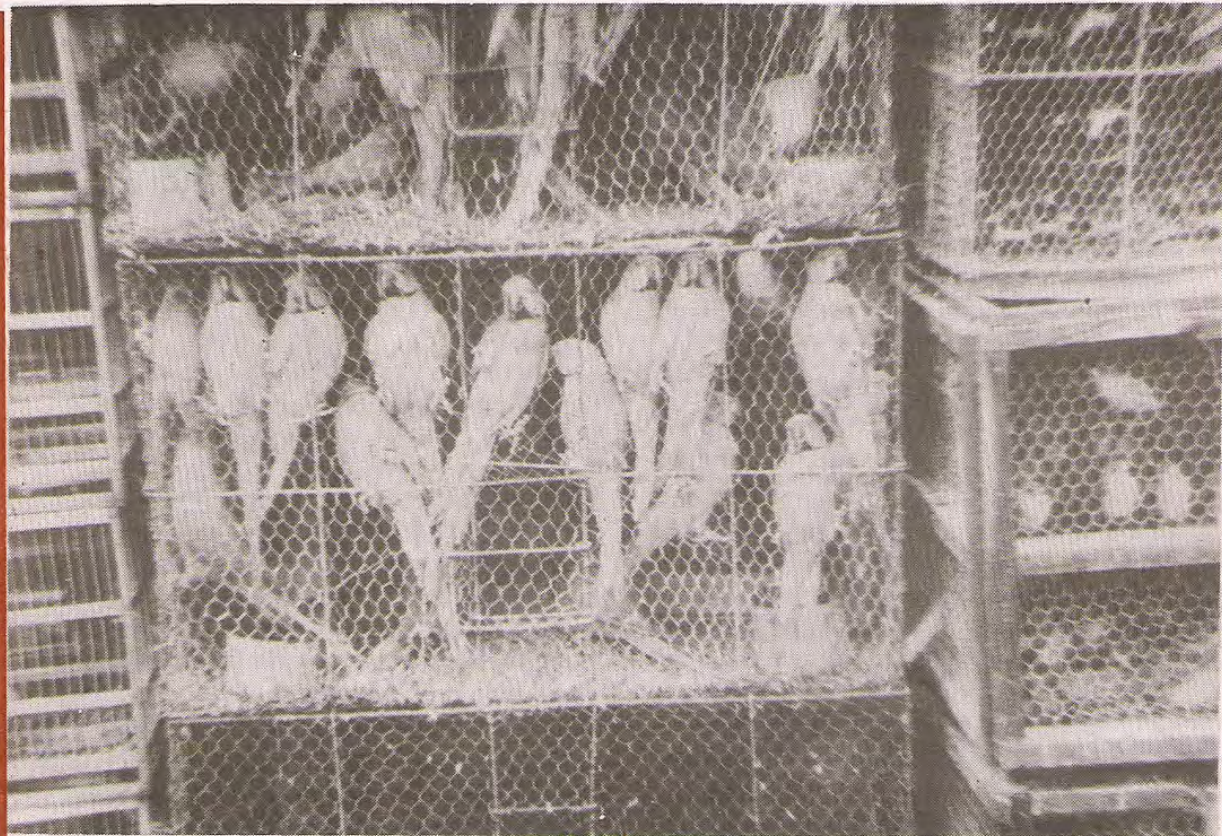
Buyers are not necessarily from the higher income group. Some poor people living in cramped conditions with very few amenities also look for non-human company. Some use these animals and birds as a means of livelihood, to perform tricks and antics for bored pedestrians or to start their own business selling the eggs or the young ones.

Most of the shops are in a dilapidated state. There are no drainage gutters, proper food or shelter facilities nor proper hygienic conditions. The authorities do not organise periodic checks by the veterinarians. It is doubtful if the medicines and injections which the dealers administer are really beneficial or if they are able to diagnose the diseases correctly.

Unpleasant and cruel though this trade appears to most people, it has quite a few defenders as well. A customer at one of the shops was quite agitated about the adverse publicity these pet shops were getting. A bird enthusiast said it is his hobby to buy birds, breed them and later exchange them for some other birds which catch his fancy. His argument is, "where else can a person pursue his hobby? The dealers are into this trade for commercial purposes and are acting in the best manner possible, given the present circumstances".

Mansoor Rashid, owner of Modern Mattress has about 13 birds at his Colaba home. He is not really perturbed by the conditions around the shops, calling them so-so with a shrug of his shoulders.

Dealers complained of slack business since the introduction of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, which has curbed the trade in specified varieties whose numbers have diminished and which have stipulated guidelines covering the sales of even the commoner species. Restrictions on exports



have also affected the trade drastically. An agitated Nusrath of Animal Supplying Shop 1 says that the sales of pets to tourists has declined sharply following restrictions. His shop houses quite a variety of birds and

animals and he staunchly denies trading in any kind of illegal activity. He discounts allegations that rare or prohibited birds and animals could be bought for 'a price'.

Courtesy : THE DAILY

Form IV
(See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about the newspapers entitled COMPASSIONATE FRIEND as required to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February.

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I, Diana Ratnagar, hereby declare that particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Dated 31st March, 1994

Sd/- Diana Ratnagar
Signature of Publisher

Cruelty blatantly displayed

Anju Sharma

A terrified turkey with its wings broken stands near the ticket seller to advertise the wonders that lie within. A man on a loudspeaker introduces the turkey as "Australia ki chidia" while inviting visitors to see "animals from far-off jungles and mountains". Welcome to Ganesh Zoo from Kota, travelling perpetrator of cruelty, myth and ignorance.

The travelling zoo, one of many of its kind in the country, has currently setup shop at Pushkar, India's big-draw animal trade fair. Among its various "khatarnak" (dangerous) possessions, the zoo has a hedgehog, introduced as "Singapore ka siyal" with "hair like thorns".

A tiny lizard-like baby crocodile in an equally small cage with two inches of water is a "magarmach", supposedly capable of "swallowing a man whole".

Two hyenas are introduced as two different species one is called a "lakadbagga" and the other a "jarak". Both of them, however, are equally dangerous, and are prone to carrying away helpless, sleeping babies.

Two lionesses sit listlessly in a cage covered on three sides, with just enough space for them to move one step in either direction. A jackal goes around in circles in a similar cage, as if it were mad. The white mice have the doubtful distinction of being called "pahadi chhua" mountain rats. In another cage, a pelican, "raj hans" (swan) according to the keeper, pokes its neck out but goes scurrying off into a corner when the keeper approaches its cage.

The keeper himself walks around with an iron rod to oblige his visitors. "Is he dead?", asks somebody in front of the crocodile's cage. "Do you think we keep dead animals here?" asks an indignant keeper, and prods the animal with his iron rod.

This zoo makes a farce out of the notification issued by the Central Government, laying down cage specifications for zoo animals to the last millimetre, and pompously stating the "primary purpose" of the zoo as "conservation". Ganesh Zoo, infact, only magnifies the horrors of regular zoos in India, where conservation is nowhere on the agenda.

All these zoos depend on one trait in human nature which draws people in hordes to see the subjugated animals the feeling of power on seeing a strong animal captive. Ganesh Zoo had to make all its animals sound dangerous to attract visitors. Each animal is perceived as a threat, and seeing them behind bars, at their mercy, gives the audience a thrill.

In the past, royalty owned menageries which were a symbol of their power and wealth. Later, the menageries became an endorsement of colonial power bringing back exotic animals from far-off lands was symbolic of capture of the lands themselves. Explorers sent back exotic animals as evidence of the dangers they were battling against. Gifting exotic animals to an imperialist power became a symbol of acknowledging subordination.

While the bigger zoos may make a pretence of "educating" their audience, Ganesh Zoo and others like it cater to the myths that their mostly rural visitors have been brought up to believe like hyenas carrying away babies.

Courtesy : THE TIMES OF INDIA.

Ethical Investments

Ranjit Konkar

When you invest your money in the stock market, do you stop to consider what your money is being used for? What the company deals in? Or is it sufficient to you that you get a large return on your investment? To many people, it is a matter of concern what activity their money is funding, to howsoever small an extent. This concern commonly extends to human welfare - thus it would be only a very selfish and thoughtless person who would invest in a company that uses child labour or is owned by persons with criminal connections. Many people extend their concern to the natural environment around us, thinking twice about supporting companies whose commercial activity leads to deforestation, pollution of rivers, air, and so forth.

Upto this point the concern is easy to understand since it directly affects us, human beings, and our quality of life. But increasingly, people are paying attention to their share (financial) of activities that violate their sense of compassion towards animals, our fellow brethren on this planet. Jains usually refuse to invest in the meat or leather businesses or in hotels serving non-vegetarian foods or in any business that involves the slaughter of animals. Investment in the poultry and marine products industries and other obviously "non-vegetarian" companies attract similar hesitation from an even larger section of the population. The problem comes with (1) activities that do not seem to involve killing of or cruelty to animals, and (2) companies whose complete range of products is not known. Did you know for example that your investment in certain cosmetic companies goes in part to extremely

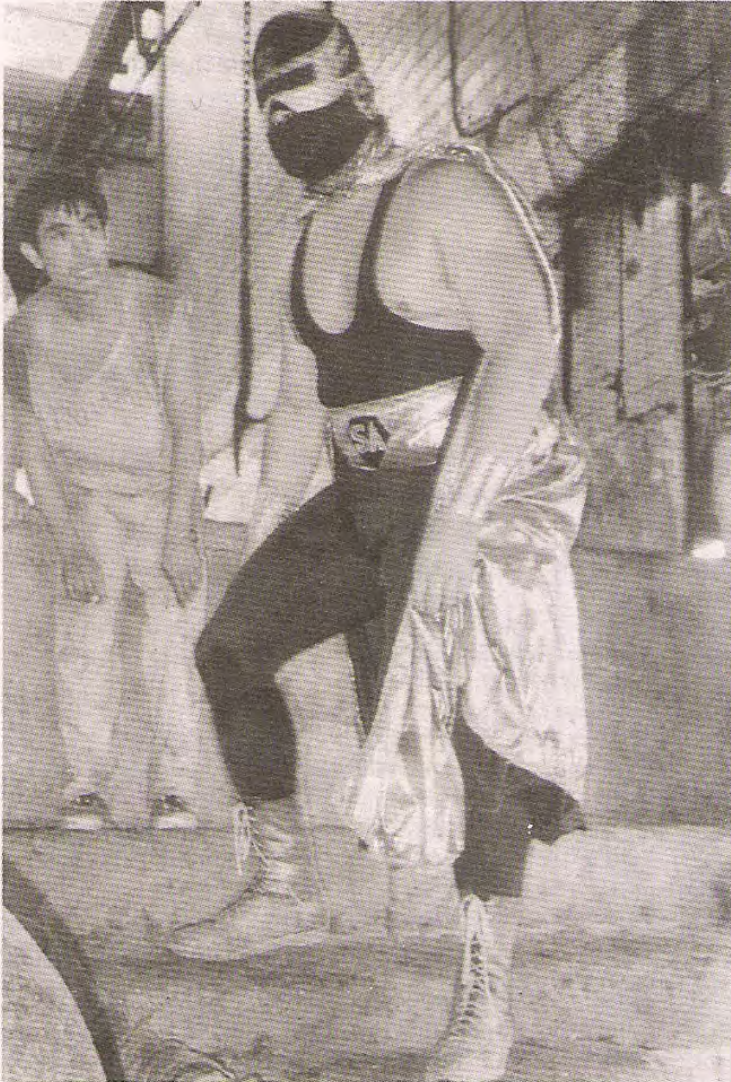
cruel testing of their products upon animals? Or that a company manufacturing steel may also be involved in exporting fish?

To help the investor in putting his money only in ethical businesses, **BWC** has decided to compile a list of companies indicating the nature of their activities. If any **BWC** member is interested in turning this into a profitable business by setting up a mutual fund to help prospective investors, there are sufficient people who would like to avail such a facility.

To the person unsure of the effect of personal investment and who feels that "If I don't invest, somebody else will, so what difference does it make?", let him realise that his investment is his stamp of approval, his blessing, for his support to the activity. The consequences of the "unethical activity" would be on **his** conscience if he supports it. If he chooses not to, then at least he can feel absolved of the guilt of being a party to it. Only when individuals take responsibility for their own actions will any thing like "public morality" emerge.

If however a personal principled stand leaves one unsatisfied and one is looking for a quick means of causing change, then one might consider (1) raising the ethical issue at shareholders' meetings by inviting support from other investors to persuade the management to change, (2) if sufficiently rich, then further increasing one's share in the company to have a greater say in policy, (3) communicate to management the decision of an entire group to withdraw support unless the desired reforms are implemented.

Persevering at compelling companies to reform could be considered rather than simply boycotting them as the ends don't have to be thrown out with the means, rather they yield greater satisfaction because of the increased nobility of the means.



Super Hero

Is it a bird? Nope. Is it a plane? Not even close. It's Super Animal! In a gold lame cape and black tights, his identity concealed by a mask, Mexico City's boldest activist, Super Animal, strides into the city's legislators' offices, hand-delivering petitions and letters supporting animal rights, and makes surprise inspections in slaughterhouses.

At 6'1" and 250 pounds, this professional wrestler became a vegetarian and stopped wearing leather after visiting a slaughterhouse. He's the front man for the National Animal Liberation Front, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of all animals in Mexico, from the mangy homeless dogs in Mexico City to the bulls who are tortured for tourists in bullrings.

Onward Super Animal!

Courtesy : PETA
NEWS.

"List of Honour" in Hindi

The 1993 edition of the **BWC** "List of Honour" is now available in Hindi. For a FREE copy of the booklet, Members are advised to write to **BWC**, Post Box 18, Poona 411 001. A donation would be appreciated from those wanting more copies.