



# COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY INDIA



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Photo : Len Rue Jr. Courtesy : PeTA



# Beauty Without Cruelty



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**Beauty Without Cruelty**  
is a way of life  
which causes no creature  
of land, sea or air,  
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# The Travails of the Fox

Sanober Z Bharucha

A brutal ritual of fox sacrifice is prevalent in a number of villages in Mandya, Mysore and Hassan Districts of Karnataka. *Compassion Unlimited Plus Action (CUPA)* along with **Beauty Without Cruelty (BWC)** took great strides in investigating this and attempted to stop this barbaric carnage.

Myth and folklore behind the fox sacrifice as revealed (Andhra Prabha 15.1.1987) in a *Puranic* episode: Once famine raged the lands. On account of scarcity of food, a fox began to cry for humanity. Lord Shiva descended to earth and enquired what the trouble was. The fox explained the plight of the people due to the famine. God was pleased with the fox's prayer and enriched all those places with prosperity. He advised the people to abandon non-vegetarian food and live life as vegetarians. For some time, the fox also lived on vegetarian food but soon began to secretly eat fish and other creatures. Lord Shiva, in his anger, cursed the fox thus: 'The people that worship you on *Makar Sankranti* will bring you before me the next day and get you bitten by their dogs and leave you away in the East'.

The *All India Animal Welfare Association* of Bombay had approached the Karnataka High Court in December 1994 when a favourable order was passed preventing the fox sacrifice from taking place in the villages of Karnataka. However, to our horror we found out that

in January 1995, some people had approached the Court and got the order vacated. In spite of the Forest Department stating that the ritual had not taken place for two to three years, we realised it was obviously a matter of what actually happened from year to year: whether, to begin with, the villagers had been successful in trapping a fox. It was reliably learnt that this year the villagers planned to include the fox-sacrifice in their *Makar Sankranti* celebrations.

A Writ Petition was therefore jointly filed in the High Court of Karnataka by *CUPA* and **BWC** to ensure that the sacrifice did not take place. Accordingly, the High Court issued directions on 14th January 1997 that the Deputy Conservator of Forests and the District Superintendents of Police should 'take appropriate effective precautionary measures to prevent the sacrifices of foxes/jackals and other animals during the above-mentioned festival'. Hon'ble Justice G C Bharuka issued these directions.

Dr Anthony Das and Dr Ranjit Konkar of **BWC** went four days in advance to Mysore and met Mr S K Nataraj, Chairman, *SPCA Mysore* and the Jains of the *Mysore Pinjrapol* who offered tremendous support. Police and Forest officials were also notified.

Dhanaganahalli village in Mysore taluk practices this fox sacrifice. The foxes, mouths sewn shut with needle and thread



and blood dripping from their mouths are presented to the deity. Thereafter, their lower right ears are cut off. Stray dogs, captured in advance and kept hungry are let loose on the tied animals. Mauled, bleeding and dying, the foxes are thereafter let loose.

**BWC** volunteers, Dr Ranjit Konkar and Mr S Marutesh went to Dhanagangahalli village on 14th January 1997. They met Police officials and the Sarpanch of the village. A fox which had been trapped was taken in a procession at 4 pm to the temple. All four legs of the animal were tied tightly together and the snout was muzzled. The volunteers somehow succeeded in putting their foot down with regard to the dog-fox fight, and it fortunately did not take place. The procession was over by 6 pm and the fox was released. Its legs had to be massaged since it could barely stand, having been tied so tightly. It ran off into the woods. Photographing the fox was not permitted. The volunteers, however, faced gory scenes of hundreds of sheep and goats slaughtered in a temple. Men were coming out by the minute with headless goats/sheep across their shoulders with blood dripping all over. With difficulty a few photographs were taken. (See pgs. 4 & 5) The villagers of Kadabahalli in Nagamandala Taluk worship their diety *Kavethi Ranganatha* with live foxes during the *Makkar Sankranti* festival. Groups of men beat drums and blow horns to drive the foxes out of their hideouts. Another group of men wait with nets outside the holes. The foxes, scared by the noise rush out and are trapped in the nets. These

captured foxes, already half dead with fright are dragged out. Ears pierced with gold earrings, the foxes are then tied to a chariot and taken around in a noisy procession. Finally fire crackers are tied to their tails and lit. They are let go with their tails on fire. Most die of the wounds that are inflicted upon them during the day.

On 13th January 1997, *CUPA* Administrator, Ms Ashrayi N Ram and volunteer Ms Varija left for Bellur and Kadbahalli villages to investigate. Preparations were in full swing at the Kevathi Ranganatha Swamy temple. The volunteers along with Forest and Police officials followed the hunting group with nets for over 9 kms. The irony is that the police constables had their backs facing the nets! Drums were beaten and loud sounds made to scare the animals out of their hideouts. Their attempts were futile. However, a fox was finally caught on 15th January 1997. The priest officiating the prayers was from Rashtrothana Parishath in Chamrajpet, Bangalore. Promises were made to see the fox enclosed in a room. Our volunteers sought Police assistance, but they were grossly misguided on the location of the house. On finding the correct house, a feeble search was made by the Police for the fox. They knew they had lost. The procession began late evening from Kaare Hutchamms Temple with drums, fireworks and obscene dances. A throng of 5000 people had assembled from 5 different villages. The fox had all along been kept in an iron box near the diety. Around 6.30 am on 16th January 1997 the fox was released. It was not possible to see clearly what exactly was



happening, due to the crowd. The villagers profusely thanked Police Sub-Inspector Anthony Williams for helping! Photographs had been forbidden and our volunteers threatened in plain sight of the Police, lest they take any photographs. In addition, about 250 goats and sheep were slaughtered.

The fox sacrifice issue got good coverage in all the local newspapers in Bangalore. CUPA and BWC efforts had lessened the cruelty inflicted on the foxes though no one could stop it completely.

First and foremost, the Forest officials as per *The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (as amended in 1991)* should have stopped the trapping of foxes. Next, on seeing the foxes caught, the Forest officials should have immediately confiscated the

animals as per the Act and released them back into the wild.

Forest officials should have taken support from the Police.

The Police should have helped the Forest officials in upholding the provisions laid down by *The Wildlife (Protection) Act*.

The Police should have carried out their duty by taking timely action to stop the sacrifice of goats and sheep under the *Karnataka Prevention of Animal Sacrifices Act*.

In view of the above facts CUPA and BWC are moving the Court to make sure that once and for all the torture and killing at these villages on Makara Sankranti ends. We care for the foxes, and also for the hundreds of sheep and goats whose lives are as important.

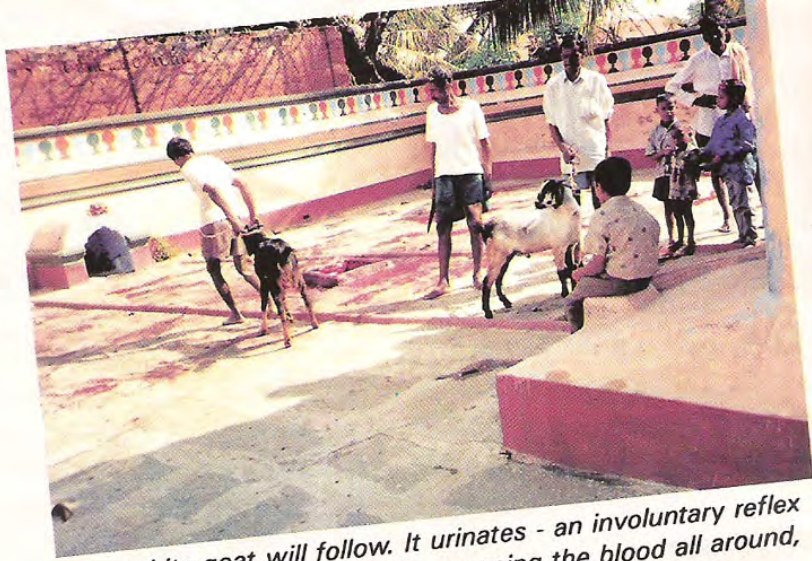


Blind faith : the fox-worshippers tie firecrackers to the petrified animal's tail, to let it loose with wounds and burns.





The blood-filled sacrificial pit at the temple in Udbur village in Karnataka, scene of the gory scarifices during Makar Sankranti.



The white goat will follow. It urinates - an involuntary reflex arising from the fear it feels on seeing the blood all around, and realising that its life may soon end.

# The Chronicles of a Sacrifice

Dr Ranjit Konkar




Two men bodily overturn the pitiously bleating goat by its legs. Children look on.

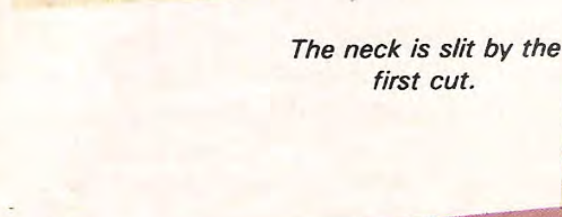


They clamp its mouth shut, to silence its fear-filled bleating






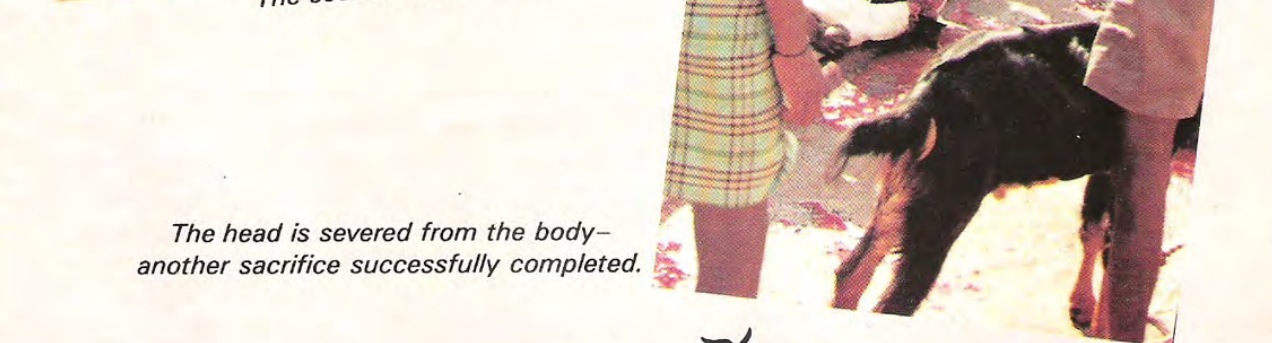
*The man applies his knife to the trussed up goat's neck.*



*The neck is slit by the first cut.*



*The second cut goes deeper.*



*The head is severed from the body—another sacrifice successfully completed.*



# The Horns of a Dilemma

Bittu Sehgal

The implications of the South African ambition for the Indian one-horned rhino are plain. The animal is already on the verge of being wiped out of its habitats by poaching gangs who have demonstrated their willingness to use automatic weapons and sophisticated surveillance equipment to kill, maim and cut.

The New Economic Policy of the Government of India is acting like a magnet for global corporate interests. People are therefore flocking to our country from the four corners of the earth in search of a quick buck. Arrivals include the South Africans who hope to negotiate new commerce and trade agreements with India. In the process, the Indian rhino might find itself at the wrong end of the barrel and could well be wiped out.

The problem centers around the visit of the South African trade delegation who tried to hard-sell the idea that the international trade in rhino horn which has been banned all these many years should be legalised. The delegation met a galaxy of Indian politicians and businessmen including major industrialists. Do any of these gentlemen even know of the subtleties of the rhino horn trade? Do they care about the fate of the Indian rhino? Your guess is as good as mine. But the implications of South African ambition for the Indian one-horned rhino are plain. The animal is already on the verge of being wiped out of its habitats in the Northeast by well-connected poaching gangs who have demonstrated their willingness to use automatic weapons and sophisticated surveillance equipment to kill, maim and cut their way through the scrappy defences which have been set up by our Government to protect the rhino and other species such as the tiger and elephant.

Despite the fact that they must operate in the dark, without official sanction, gangs have still managed to commandeer so much money that they can actually buy political protection as and when they need it. Moreover, they are able to routinely bail out known offenders on the rare occasions that they are thrown in the clink when caught red-handed. As might be imagined, it is tough enough to cope with the situation as it is, therefore adding legitimacy to the rhino horn trade would be the last straw for *Rhinoceros unicornis*.

I hasten to add here that I do not expect or suggest for one moment that our Government would agree to the killing of rhinos in Assam (though even such ideas have indeed been mooted by hunters). But the effect of loosening of global protection would have precisely this effect... even as we continue to spend crores of rupees to 'protect our heritage'. The main obstacle in the way of the South African Government is the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)* whose members once felt that regulation of trade might actually help conserve rhinos, but had to quickly alter this position when the numbers of rhinos in Africa began to fall to extinction levels as a result. A total ban is now in place and must remain so. But not if South Africa has its way. Using the carrot of 'business opportunity' it seeks to rope in businessmen and their various associations to pressure the Indian Government to revoke or at least dilute the ban. This is almost certainly one of the most crucial hidden agendas for their trade delegations to India. Unfortunately, none of the Indian officials who have negotiated terms are even remotely involved with the issue of wildlife protection



and there is a very real risk that out of sheer ignorance, our nation might therefore fall prey to South Africa's hidden agenda.

Of course, we can expect a host of very seductive proposals to justify the South African position. The very first would be 'we only want to raise money to save the rhino in the wild'. The next would be the regulation route: 'we will put in such stringent conditions that no illegal trade will be possible'. There can be only one sane response to this farce: 'Hogwash!'

If by fair means or foul, South Africa manages to legalise its bloody rhino trade it will result in the direct death of hundreds of Indian rhinos because once a horn has been processed into medicine or into some kind of obscene artifact it is impossible to tell its origin. So when an Indian trader obtains expensive 'legal' horns from Africa, he will very quickly search for much cheaper supplies from areas such as Kaziranga to supplement stocks.

As of now the South Africans are scrambling for world support for a change in the CITES appendices. I believe that this is one very major reason for the visit of the trade delegation. It is crucial therefore that conservationists in India quickly flood our Prime Minister's Office with telegrams and letters demanding that our Government strengthen and not dilute the CITES ban on rhino (and ivory). Any laxity will endanger our precious wildlife. Send letters asking for enhanced protection for rhinos and a continued ban on trade to: The Prime Minister of India, South Block, New Delhi. Demand that no dilution be allowed in rhino protection laws or wildlife trade agreements. One way or the other,

this particular state visit seriously threatens the existence not only of the Southern white rhinoceros, *Ceratotherium simum simum*, but also of *Rhinoceros unicornis*. The rationale presented by the South Africans revolves around the premise that commercialising the trade in horns and rhino parts will release funds for the conservation of the species. But this has proved to be successful only in very limited areas, for limited periods. On a global scale, and in the long run, such strategies have resulted in the virtual wiping out of rhinos in all areas where protection is even slightly below par (almost all through the animal's range). Just how dangerous this situation is can best be gauged by the fact that rhino poachers are now trading horns for weapons to supply insurgents in the Northeast and also in other Himalayan hot spots. Is any of this in our national interest?

Once and for all the projection of 'sustainable use' of rhino horn must be wiped out of the lexicon of conservation. Or else we will be left with nothing but regrets and memories of one of the most ancient life forms on earth.

*Courtesy: Sanctuary Features*



*Photo : Homi Ravadi*



# Values in Action

**Radha Burnier**

Values cannot be theoretical; they must find expression in relationships, and all actions, thoughts, feelings and speech. It is impossible actually to be *aware* of a value - as distinguished from talking or thinking about it - without expressing it in action and behaviour.

As individuals, we have an unconscious idea that we can assign value to things according to our convenience: this is very valuable and something else is insignificant, and so on. But there is no general concurrence about values so assigned. Enormous cruelty is practised on animals and human beings in the present-day world. But there are also people who see value in every form of life.

Many years ago when I was in Varanasi, a dog happened to bite a child, perhaps it was frightened. There was an uproar about it; people said the dog must be caught and destroyed. But the dog was clever. He appeared and disappeared at the right moments. A poor, illiterate man who sold milk in the place regularly fed the dog. So people said: "It is to you that the dog will come. We will give you a noose, put it over his neck and catch him." The man said unequivocally, "No, I will not do it. This dog has been taking food from my hands every day. He trusts me, and I will not betray his trust." Nothing could persuade that poor, uneducated man to do otherwise. He said, "When a creature trusts me, how can I betray him?" It is not only the saints who have this feeling for life. A very simple person can have it.

Unfortunately there are others who do not regard life as life. For instance, in various areas in the world, people are culling wildlife. When they think that a particular kind of animal is becoming too numerous, people go and shoot hundreds of thousands of them, believing that they restore Nature's balance. Actually, they were the ones who disturbed the balance to start with; then they pretend they will restore that balance. In Australia and New Zealand the first settlers introduced animals such as hares, stoats and weasels, which did not exist there before. Now they are culling these "foreign" animals which have lived for more than a hundred years in the new continent - which is massacre on a huge scale - to "save" the rare native species. Similarly, a particular type of goose introduced into the British Isles has proliferated widely over Europe, and is declared not good for the native birds. Environmental enthusiasts are killing them by the tens of thousands.

What then happens to the human mind, which regards these creatures of no importance? It proceeds to cull human beings also. This is what Hitler did. He culled, not only the Jews, but all who did not have the right kind of blood, whatever that may mean. There are people who regard living things as of so little value that it means nothing to them if they destroy on a large scale. Whether people cull the Tutsi tribe in Africa, non-



Aryans in Europe, elephants in Asia, or stoats and weasels in New Zealand, it is all the same thing. It is certain inability to sense value.

Is value relative? Perhaps, the assigning of values has no validity at all. Who are we to assign value? We are confused; our values change all the time; they are personal, relative.

Fortunately, leading thinkers, including some scientists, are coming to what I call the theosophical point of view; for example Charles Birch, an eminent Australian scientist, says that everything without exception has intrinsic value. The imposed value is fancy, made to suit our biases. In reality *everything* - the lowliest insect, human beings, animals, trees, everything - has an intrinsic value and purpose in the vast scheme of the universe, of which Theosophy speaks. Leading thinkers have also begun to speak about a certain coherence in the cosmos, a system which is orderly and beautiful. It is beautiful because it is so harmonious, manifesting a wonderful co-ordination of diverse things. All life processes are part of a stupendous plan, and everything within it has a purpose, is part of that plan. When we refuse to see value, it is because we are blind, not because the thing lacks value, but it looks to us as if it has no value.

So there has to be a change in our position. Instead of feeling that we human beings are at the summit, and that it is our God-given right to put labels on things and say, "This is good, that is bad, this is high, that is low, this can be killed, that cannot be killed," and so on, we should learn humility and try to open our eyes and see the hitherto unseen value in all of this earth and its creatures, and even outside the earth.

A total respect for life comes when our view is holistic. The people who decide that there are too many ruddy geese in Europe and that they must be culled may not be without any sense of value, but they have a narrow view, and are only concerned with one thing; they are obsessed by a particular idea. There are others who work a great deal for the poor, yet remain completely indifferent to Nature as a whole. There are still others who work ardently for the good of humanity but who are harsh towards non-human life. The partial view is necessarily faulty.

What are values? Truth is a value, so are Love and Compassion, but sometimes there appears to be a conflict between two of them. When hunted down by a ruffian, suppose a person sought shelter and hid in one's home, should one tell the truth to the killer? Should one uphold the value of compassion or of truthfulness in such a case? Perhaps such problems do not arise when one's perspective is holistic. We need to consider the subtle and complex aspects of implementing values in action.

Courtesy: WAKE UP INDIA





# Conservation for Slaughter?

*Letter written to the Hon'ble Union Minister for Environment and Forests  
by the Chairperson of BWC, India*

30th October 1996

**Capt Jainarain Prasad Nishad**  
Union Minister for Environment & Forests  
Paryavaran Bhavan CGO Complex,  
Lodi Road New Delhi 110 003

Dear Hon'ble Sir,

**Beauty Without Cruelty**, an international animal rights organisation, would like to put on record the following facts in view of the possibility of the Ministry of Environment & Forests approving animals/reptiles/birds being bred and killed for consumptive use. We strongly feel that such projects should never be allowed.

1. With reference to the Tamil Nadu State Government's proposal, it would be most unethical if projects which have started out as conservation measures should as in the case of crocodiles end up as commercial propositions in which the reptiles are bred and killed.
2. If the Ministry (Gol) approves of crocodiles which have successfully over-bred to be slaughtered for skins, what is to stop the Ministry from approving the killing of say tigers for their skins if and when they too successfully breed in zoos? The concept of breeding animals for commercial exploitation and/or consumptive use (skins, furs, meat, and other parts) is in itself inadvisable.
3. The original plan of releasing captive-bred crocodiles into rivers was not implemented as the authorities kept claiming that the fish population would reduce and it would prove a threat to humans! Yet, they did not wisely stop breeding them. In fact, the Ministry has repeatedly since 1981 been advising to stop breeding them immediately. Even now the breeding can be halted.
4. It is but obvious why the authorities, particularly Romulus Whitaker of the Crocodile Bank has refused to pay heed to the Gol directives and stop breeding crocodiles. It is now argued that as there are too many crocodiles and no where for them to go they should be slaughtered for their skins. The Ministry should keep in mind that the Crocodile projects started in 1975 were purely conservation oriented and were for only collecting eggs from the wild, incubating them and rearing the hatchlings up to one metre in length at which time they were to be released back into the wild.
5. Wildlife 'experts' have been stating that there is a 'flourishing illegal trade in crocodile skins'. This is no justification for permitting these over-bred crocodiles to be slaughtered for their skins. In fact it is one more important reason why the Ministry should not allow it because in doing so it will only assist in legalising such illegal activities. It is the duty of the Government to catch and punish the poachers and smugglers.
6. If permission for slaughter of crocodiles for commercial exploitation is granted by the Ministry, it will be against the very work and objectives of the Ministry itself. What is to stop traders from passing off skins from poached crocodiles being included with the skins of farm bred ones? Let us face the fact that our enforcement mechanism is not good enough to detect the origin of the skins. It will be impossible to distinguish between crocodile skins from the wild and those of captive-bred crocodiles. Today Papua New Guinea has no crocodiles in the wild - they vanished after captive breeding for commercial exploitation was introduced in the country. We are sure the Ministry would not like the same story to be repeated in India.



7. Crocodiles may not be loveable creatures, nevertheless, there is no excuse to convert them into handbags, shoes, wallets, belts and many other fashionable items of vanity. If the Ministry sanctions the commercial exploitation, thousands of crocodiles will continue to be bred and confined under grossly unnatural and overcrowded conditions, only to be mercilessly killed. Our country is known for its principles of 'ahimsa' and reverence for all life so let us stick to our own culture and not put commerce before compassion by taking advantage of an over-successful conservation programme. Let it not be said that crocodile conservation in India resulted in actual deaths/killing and commercial exploitation of the species.

Your reply will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

Yours truly,

sd/-

Diana Ratnagar

Chairperson BWC India and

Former Hon Consultant to Govt of India on Animal Welfare, Ministry of Environment & Forests



मंत्री  
पर्यावरण एवं वन  
भारत  
MINISTER  
ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS  
INDIA

D.O. No.6-11/87-WL.I (Vol.II)

17 DEC 1996

Dear Ms. Ratnagar,

Please refer to your of 30th October, expressing your concern about commercial farming of crocodiles. There is presently no proposal either from the Govt. of Tamil Nadu or any other State which is under consideration of this Ministry for commercial farming of crocodiles. Our Ministry has already advised the States to stop further captive breeding of crocodiles and to take necessary measures to rehabilitate the existing crocodiles in the captive rearing centres into the wild habitats.

I thank you for your concern for the conservation of our endangered crocodiles.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

[ CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD ]

Ms. Diana Ratnagar,  
Chairperson,  
Beauty Without Cruelty International,  
4, Prince of Wales Drive,  
Wanowise,  
POONA - 411 040.  
MAHARASHTRA



# Crocodile Facts

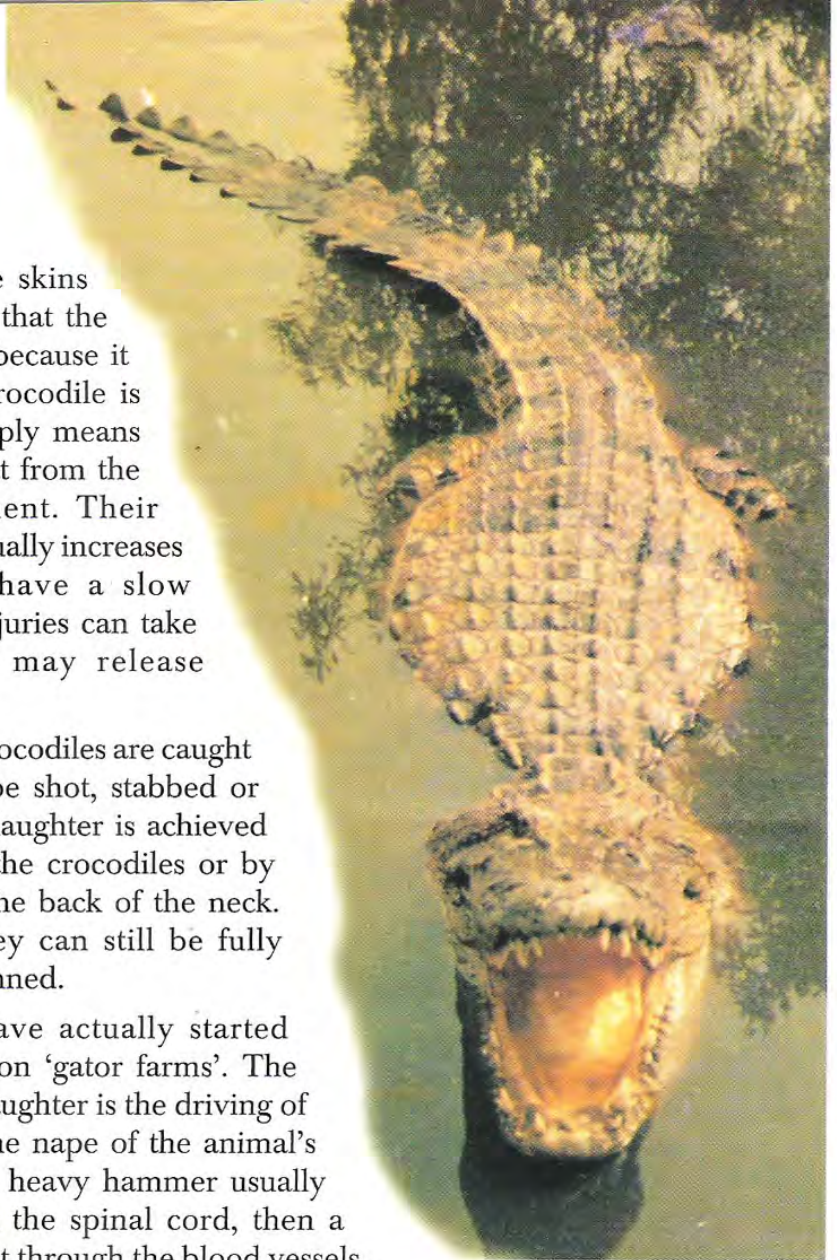
Consumers of crocodile skins and meat might assume that the animal could not suffer because it was 'cold-blooded'. A crocodile is 'ectothermic', which simply means that it takes its body heat from the surrounding environment. Their 'cold-blooded' nature actually increases their suffering, they have a slow metabolic rate and so injuries can take longer to repair and may release potentially lethal toxins.

In South America most crocodiles are caught in the wild. They may be shot, stabbed or caught with nets. Final slaughter is achieved by repeatedly clubbing the crocodiles or by spearing them through the back of the neck. Studies have shown they can still be fully conscious as they are skinned.

In the USA farmers have actually started ranching the crocodiles on 'gator farms'. The most common form of slaughter is the driving of a long steel chisel into the nape of the animal's neck. Several blows of a heavy hammer usually force the chisel through the spinal cord, then a second blade is used to cut through the blood vessels.

Slow metabolic rates mean that most crocodiles may take up to 2 hours to lose consciousness. It has been reported by some slaughterhouses in the US that the animals may still be moving as they are carved up. A recent undercover investigate by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PeTA) in the USA revealed some particularly outrageous practices on one 'gator farm'. The investigator watched with horror as the farm workers began a mass slaughter - with an aluminium baseball bat.

Ninety per cent of crocodiles have injuries as fighting is common on a crowded farm. Heat stroke due to insufficient shade and disease from dirty water result in fatality rates of between 10 to 20 per cent in young animals.



*Courtesy: The Vegetarian Society of the UK*



We are most thankful to the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) for hosting a free website for our quarterly magazine *Compassionate Friend*.

BWC is accessible at <http://giaspn01.vsnl.net.in/~bwcindia>. Comments regarding the site are welcome. We do not yet have e-mail, but hope to soon. We request members to inform their friends and relatives about the site. This will help in creating awareness about our work and in winning new helpers in our cause.



**Your Love  
For Animals  
Can Go On Forever.  
The Last Thing We Want Is  
To Lose Our Friends,  
But You Can Help Continue  
Our Animal Rights Mission  
With A Bequest To  
Beauty Without Cruelty**

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Educational Institutional Membership Rs 100/- p a  
Institutional Membership Rs 1000/- p a

Donations, big and small, are welcome by our charity and are exempt under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

#### Form IV (See Rule 8)

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

Dated 1st March, 1997

sd/- Diana Ratnagar  
Signature of Publisher



~~If you love animals called PETS ...~~



Photo : VSUK Ltd

~~why do you eat animals called DINNER?~~

Be kind to animals - by not eating them



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