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COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY INDIA



**Circus
or
Circurse!**



Beauty Without Cruelty

INDIA

An International Educational Charitable Trust for Animal Rights

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Currently under repair!

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This issue comes to you with fewer pages than before. The changing world of postal rules and regulations regarding the rates for posting periodicals has forced us to downsize our magazine by four full pages from sixteen to twelve. Because of the leaflet on Leather that we have inserted this time, the number of written pages is still lower—only eight. This has resulted in many of the old and regular columns being dropped, and size of articles drastically cut down. In many cases we are doing away with extensive writing altogether, using only captioned pictures to explain what we want to. We are also trying to use this as an opportunity to try out another, briefer format of the magazine—maybe a newsletter.

As we change the format, we are also looking for fresh human resources. We want to segregate the work of reporting/publishing from that of investigation and research. For this we wish to get aboard people to form a journalists' team, who would dedicatedly handle the reporting. Editorial talent is especially sought by the current editor to

relieve him. So people with journalistic talents are invited to become part of the proposed editorial team.

Our experiment with a Hindi version of the magazine also met with a lacklustre response. We do not have an idea of how many of our readers who received the copy appreciated its medium. However, that will not shake our resolve of publishing in the vernacular medium; we are firm in our belief that India is to be reached only through the non-English medium. We just ask that you let us have your feedback so that we come to know the worth of our efforts.

The work of the organisation plods on: we have some exciting projects going on and some planned for the near future. This issue talks about some of these. ✨



Ranjit Konkar, Ph.D.
Editor



BWC welcomes its new Delhi and Varanasi Directors!

With great regret, we announce the untimely demise of late Ms. Kamala Shastri, Director of BWC's Delhi Centre. The Centre will now be headed by Dr. Iqbal Kour Malik who has taken over since 4th May 2003. We urge all our Delhi members to hereon liaise with Dr. Malik for enquiries or information related to BWC, our activities, or any other form of help as well.

Likewise, our Varanasi centre too has a new Director, Mr. Navneet Raman, who has taken over from Dr. C. V. Agarwal who unfortunately had to move to Chennai. Our Varanasi members can interact with Mr. Raman from hereon. ✨

BWC's website www.bwcindia.org currently under repair. Kindly bear with us until complete.

To: The Editor,
Compassionate Friend

8.1.03

such as in an official letter or a petition to authorities, the **BWC** office would be glad to play its role.

Dear Sir,

I am a Life Member...living here out of India for 25 years. I am enclosing a card I got in the mail at Hong Kong. There is an exhibition of Fur on Feb 28 and 1-2 March 2003. See if we have contacts there and some protests could be possible.

Sincerely yours,
Ram Kumar Singh

BWC : We get many letters like this saying "There is something wrong happening here. Why doesn't **BWC** do something." While we are pleased that someone at least cares enough to want some action to be taken and thinks of us in this regard, our reply continues to be that *you* as a **BWC** Life Member should undertake the organisation of protests, *etc.*, in your home town. Local activism is expected from the locals. Who else will do it? **BWC** will back you up strongly if you show initiative. But the physical presence will have to be *yours*. The organisation is nothing but the sum of its members. Where organizational identity is required,

To: The Editor,
Compassionate Friend

10.4.03

I appeal through your magazine to stop Non-vegetarian food in Trains and Planes and in Railway Stations, Aerodromes and Bus stand and save the life of Animals. Live and Let live.

T.Y.

BWC : Another common kind of letter, mistakenly supposing us to possess dictatorial powers! The result expected from this letter is, however, something that we *can* think of achieving in the distant future by starting a campaign *now*. Unfortunately, public opinion is not invited for most policy decisions. The decision to allow McDonalds to set up its stall on railway stations and platforms was not public news. The first that one heard of it was the announcement of its impending inauguration in the papers. It was too late to do anything about it then. We will keep you informed, however, of our plans to popularize vegetarian food in the railways and airlines. ✨



A Vegetarian Lifestyle is in the mail!



At long last, the second edition of *A Vegetarian Lifestyle* is out of the press, thanks to The Asian Star Company Ltd. who has very generously sponsored its printing. All those who requested a copy of have been sent one. We can't apologise enough for the tremendous delay behind the publication of this edition, but promise that the next one will be out on time. In the meantime, we are working on the Hindi and Gujarati versions of the book also. The book, with 60 pages and a tearout shopping list in it, is priced at Rs. 40. Life members are eligible to one free copy *but only upon ordering* using our order form from the previous two issues or our website www.bwcindia.org. ✨

Rambo Circus

Khurshid Chaudhari

(Education Officer and Project Co-ordinator)



BWC kept an eye on the Rambo Circus when it visited Pune this summer. Backstage investigations were carried out by Government-authorised personnel of BWC and SPCA with the assistance of the Government's Forest Department and Customs Department, represented by Mr. Shekhar Kumar Niraj, Regional Deputy Director (Wildlife Preservation) & Assistant Management Authority (CITES) to find out



more about the condition in which the animals were kept. The findings were a mix of satisfactory, suspect, and less-than-tolerable. First the satisfactory:

- The circus was abiding by the Government's ban on the use of tiger, lion, panther, monkey, and bear for performances.
- The circus had a veterinary doctor in tow.

The suspect findings:

- Records were not properly maintained. Animals unregistered, count not agreeing, names changed were among the violations found.

From attending their show, we found out that dogs, elephants, camels, birds, horses, and chimpanzees were the various animals made to perform for the show. A description of what the various animals were made to do follows. The acts which we felt must have been distinctly bothersome or even painful to the animals, are highlighted in red.



Dogs: i) Eleven dogs are made to walk in a circle, their forepaws resting on each other's backs. ii) Two of them are then made to walk upright

on their hind legs with no other support. iii) Finally, in a most contorted posture, one of the dogs is made to walk on its forepaws round the ring. A handstand! It is continuously prodded with a stick by a man following it to keep the rear legs from touching down. Spectators (even other than us) were seen to grimace while watching this last act.

Birds:

Normally caged, the



birds—Macaws, Cacatoos, and Fan-Tailed Pigeons—are made to i) fly out and back on command; ii) pull a toy tabletop cart to which all are harnessed like horses. None of the birds used were handled delicately or with care. The fan-tailed pigeons were treated quite roughly by the keeper when they were put back in their cage. Almost stuffed like poultry into cages!

Elephants:

i) One elephant was made to play cricket. This was actually the most popular act because, however simple it might have been, the animal interacts with the crowd. It was revealing and impressive even to us to watch how much strength the elephant packs into its trunk. Another elephant was made to perform an aarti at the end of the show with a diya (a lighted wick) in an urn (a kamandal) that it was carrying by its handle in its trunk with the diya directly under and close to the trunk, presenting the chances of causing burns or scaring the animal which like all animals is scared



of fire. Fortunately, neither happened, presumably because of the small size of the flame and a safe distance, but we felt it loaded with the possibility of danger.

Horses: A Russian girl rides a horse round the ring at good pace picking up handkerchiefs flung in its path.



Camels: Made to parade round the ring along with the elephants.

Chimpanzees: The chimpanzee, made to wear a convict's garb, is led in by a girl and a man, by ropes tied to its neck, hand, and waist and held slack by three people in the background. It is made to sit on a chair and munch on a sweet. Then it is made to ride a bicycle twice round the ring. On completing the ride, it is made to sit on the chair again and given a bottle of some aerated drink which it sips and returns. After a while, when being led out of the ring, all of a sudden it pulls hard at the ropes and tries to get loose. We do not know whether this is part of the act or an attempt on its part to free itself. He keeps yanking hard at the ropes but in vain, for the workers quickly wind his ropes round the iron rods and immobilise him. The chimpanzee, after struggling for a few more minutes, resigns to his fate and gives up his fight. Amidst loud music he is whisked away.

One more loophole that discovered by us is that the Circuses are required to register with the Animal Welfare Board of India only those animals which perform in the ring, *not* all animals in their possession. This gives ample scope for animal replacement from the unregistered ones when dead or incapable of performing.

- The CITES certificate used to bring the Chimpanzee into the country appears to have expired in 1994
- One certificate seems to have been used multiple times to import and export the animals from one middle east country to another and then to India.

Some notable happenings on our tour backstage:

- One of the elephants tied like the rest by all four legs was desperately trying—unsuccessfully of course—with its trunk to loosen itself of its restraining ropes. A very heart-rending sight.
- While we stood watching the chimpanzee in its cage, it changed its demeanour from tranquil and calm to angry and upset about something. In front of all of us standing there watching agape and aghast in increasing incredulity and fright, it started jumping up and down on the floor of the cage with such force and ferocity that it brought alive all that we had read about King-Kong. Noone knew the reason for their behavior—one only hopes that it is not a symptom of mental deprivation in captivity.

A full report of our findings and recommendations of action have been submitted to Dr. Somesh Banik, Secretary, AWBI, Mr. L. Man Singh, Director General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Mr. John Sellar, Enforcement Officer—CITES Secretariat, Shri T. R. Baalu, Union Minister for Environment and Forests (GOI), and Mr. Shekhar Kumar Niraj, mentioned above. Mr. John Sellar responded very positively to our query and has said that he will look into the matter of the animal's certificates.

It would be unfair not to mention that the circus authorities were very cooperative in our investigations and did not present any hindrances. They seemed to *want* to abide by the law and were open and flexible enough to invite our suggestions and implement them instantly. On our recommendation, the manager *cancelled* the handstand act of the Pomeranian dog with little resistance, and also got workers to transfer some birds from overstuffed cages (backstage) to empty, unused ones. On our part, we did not make unreasonable demands of them, restricting ourselves only to what the law demanded and to only the very distasteful of the acts. In our role as animal *welfare* officers, we were duty-bound to do so.



Product re search at BWC

The past six months have seen considerable progress on product research at BWC conducted by our Research Volunteer Rushikesh Vyas at Bangalore and our Research Officer Sudeshna Banerjee at Mumbai. Rushikesh, a B. Pharm graduate, took it on as a personal project to trace brands of food products in the market that were not abiding by the recently created Government regulations requiring companies to affix a logo on their packaging indicating whether or not their product is vegetarian or non-vegetarian. He had the following violations to report from his sample of surveyed products: a) not printing the ingredients at all on the packaging, a violation of the Rule 32 of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954, b) not printing any logo regarding the vegetarianism of the product, a violation of the recent Notification G.S.R. 245 (E) and Notification G.S.R. 358 (E) announcing Prevention of Food Adulteration (Fourth Amendment) Rules, 2001, and c) deliberate deceptions like printing "100% Veg" prominently while simultaneously carrying the brown symbol. BWC has sent written complaints about many of these cases to the companies themselves as well as to the Union Ministry of Health. We were pleasantly surprised to hear back from some of them promptly, saying that they would take care of it in their next packaging. What action the Administration chooses to take remains to be seen.

Nutraceuticals: foods or drugs?

Many of these violations were seen to happen in the case of 'nutraceuticals', the new health food segment of the consumer products. These companies seem to follow neither the rules for foods nor those for drugs! BWC feels strongly that if something is allowed to be put



Beauty Without Cruelty—India



into the mouth without requiring a doctor's prescription, then it should be of whale derivatives in Ayurveda!

One of the unpleasant findings was the amount and type of animal products that Ayurveda uses. All sorts of substances from killed animals seem to be used in Ayurveda. Rushikesh's research revealed frequent mention in the literature of *praval* (coral/crushed shell), *mukta* (pearl), *shukti* (oyster), *shambuk* (snail), *samudraphen* (cuttle fish) as medicine ingredients. But the most shocking to us was the use of "amber." Amber refers to ambergris, a substance obtained from whales. Whaling—the hunting of whales on the open seas—is one of the activities that is the subject of intense international debate, the animal rights people on one side and the profiting nations (for example,



Japan, Norway) on the other. India's cast her vote on the side of the whale's rights. And yet we continue to use whale-derived substances in our native system of medicine!!!? How are we any different from China that uses substances from the tiger's body for medicinal purposes, killing our own tiger? Is it right for us to kill other's whales if we don't like our tigers to be killed? And with what right do we point our finger at cosmetics manufacturers for using ambergris as a fixative when we are using it for an equally frivolous use—as an aphrodisiac—ourselves? Where is our famed *abimsa* in these matters?

There are numerous medicines that use animal ingredients. To mention only a few of them: Kasturibhairav Ras, Brahmi Bati, Visham Jwarantak, Moti Bhasma, Moti Pishti, Prawal Bhasma, Mukta Shukti Bhasma of Baidyanath has one or more of the ingredients amber, pearl, oyster and coral, etc. Ajin capsules, Amberforte tablets, Desirex Cap-


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Volunteers needed for BWC's next project:



The Mumbai Animal Helpline

This is a call to the entire 2,500-plus community of **BWC** members in Mumbai city to enroll in our ambitious project, the **Mumbai Animal Helpline**. Imagined on the lines of the 10-9-8 Cbildline facility of the city, this project is one that aids the street-level rescue, care, and rehabilitation of animals. **BWC** is grateful to Ms. Aurora Doyon for contributing the seed money for starting the project. Read below to learn what it is planned to be and if interested in being one of your area's volunteers, please enroll with us.

The 'Animal Helpline': what it is

An easy-to-reach phone information service that assists persons needing help (physical or information) in rescuing an animal in distress or even those needing general animals- or vegetarianism-related issues.

How it would be used

Example 1: You are driving along the road and notice some bears being taken along (for bear shows ahead, presumably). You wish to report the guys taking the bears and want the bears taken away from them and put in their natural habitat somewhere. You haven't the foggiest how to go about it. You want to know the following:

- 🐻 Is it illegal to be in possession of bears? If so, what is the specific offence?
- 🐻 How do I approach these guys? Why would they listen to me? There's only one of me and three of them. More importantly, they are on the move, how do I get them to stop?
- 🐻 Who is the enforcement authority? The police? The wildlife department? Any other force?
- 🐻 Where is the nearest police station? What is involved in complaining to the police?
- 🐻 How do I rehabilitate the animals, even if I can get them taken away? Is that my responsibility or can someone else handle that?

Example 2: You are at a store and are comparing brands of an item. You wish to know which is better to buy on the basis of their animal testing/ingredient status. You have heard that **BWC** maintains a list.

Example 3: You want to eat out and would like to know the vegan restaurants in town.

Now, how nice it would be if there was a number you could call up and get all the above information and (in the first case above) some persons' physical help in the situation. The Animals Helpline would do just that for you.

How it would work

You call up the helpline, get a live human immediately on the line, and explain the situation to him/her. The help you require would be arranged for you / given to you, e.g.:

- Giving you a number you need to contact yourself
- Contacting a person (with a valid request of course) to pass on your message
- Arranging a conference call to a party in case you need to speak but your phone doesn't have the reach (STD calls, for example)
- Arranging a conference call to a party in case you need to personally speak (to be told by a vet how to handle a situation, for example)
- Getting people (volunteers / animal experts /

vets) sent to you for help from the area in which you are. Contacting such people from our database first and telling them where they need to go

- Getting ambulance sent to you etc.

Structure of the Helpline

The Animals Helpline would have

- one/two persons attending it round the clock, trained to use computer databases and in talking politely to callers

- a computer database of information on:

- animal laws of India and states and cities
- Schedule of animals
- list of all vets, all animal hospitals, all chemists around the city
- list of police stations and personnel manning them
- list of forest department offices
- list of all persons who have volunteered to be contacted when needed
- list of shelters, panjrapols, pounds
- list of experts (on snakes, birds,...) etc

- software that will allow the operator instant access to this information

- special telephone equipment to allow conference calls, caller id, taping of call, simultaneous ringing of multiple numbers (to allow all volunteers to be contacted simultaneously, for example)

Resources estimated

- Computer
- Database software
- GIS (Geographical Information Systems)

software

d. Telephone equipment

e. Place to operate from

f. Two trained operators

BWC calls for...

- ♦ committed members to enroll as standing volunteers,
- ♦ kind donors to sponsor a) the physical needs of the project: the computer, the software work, the telephone equipment, b) the salaries of the operators, c) space from which to operate this project,
- ♦ organisations who are interested in joining us in management and execution of the project to call us.

Demonstrate *your* commitment towards animals : enroll in the Animal Helpline as a “standing volunteer,” a person who commits to attending any call to rescue an animal or come to the aid of other such volunteers. **BWC** eagerly looks forward to your committing to come to the rescue of animals come what may! Without your joining this project, it would be a non-starter. If we want an animal helpline, we must commit our time to it. Please call our Mumbai office (2272 2775/6) between 10:30 and 6:30 to enroll or to obtain more information.



Continued from page 5

sules Fekal Capsules of Anuja Pharmaceuticals are some others. The manufacturers of these medicine were very casual in admitting to us how the substance is “actually banned” but how its use still goes

unchecked since “no one checks.” **BWC** plans to launch an awareness drive on this matter.



BWC Delhi exhibits a cruelty-free lifestyle



On 14th October 2003, our Delhi centre reached out and touched many a conscience in the city. The aim was to make people more aware of the cruelties inflicted on all types of life forms for our frivolous fashion, food, and lifestyle needs. The exhibition, titled 'Compassionate Lifestyle' and organised by our new Delhi director, Dr. Iqbal Kour Malik, threw light on various direct cruelties like the slaughter and torture of animals as well as indirect cruelties on air, water, and soil, that man is solely responsible for. Visitors were not only introduced to the fact that they play a pivotal role in these cruelties but were also presented with a choice; the choice of adopting a lifestyle that encourages the everyday use of humane alternatives. A special 'reading corner' was also set up where one could obtain information on issues like cruelty in circuses, killer chemicals, caged animals, and the cruel use of animals in movies through folders and **BWC** news letters. **BWC** would like to sincerely thank The Academy of Fine Arts and Literature for providing us with the venue and Blue Bells International school for volunteering infrastructural help.



ADOPT A SCHOOL NEAR YOU

BWC has kicked off its school program in Mumbai with a visit to the Bombay International School at Babulnath. The response was encouraging; we have been called back to address students of other classes also. Our agenda at these programs at schools/colleges consists of awareness-raising through a Powerpoint presentation (that contains within it clips from our film), discussion with the students, invitation to them to start a **BWC** Kids Club at their school, and a meeting with the principal to discuss policy changes we would like them to make to become more animal-friendly.

We plan to cover one school/college per week for the entire next year. For that to happen, we need the help of **all of you Mumbai members**. It is going to be very difficult to conduct activities at all the schools with our office staff of just *three* people

who are already busy beyond their capacities. Therefore, you as a **BWC** member need to help us. What we ask of you is the following: identify a school near your place where you have some contact (maybe your children's school). Obtain for us an introduction to that school's principal. We would approach the principal with you to ask for permission to present our program to their kids. Accompany us during the actual program. And thenceforth be our local liaison with the school. Be **BWC's** contact person with that school. We plan to conduct monthly activities so 1-2 days a month is what we expect from you.



Please come forward to participate in this. The success of the organisation's activities depends upon you. Contact us at our Mumbai number 2272 2775/6 to volunteer and get more details. Or email us at education@bwcindia.org.

BWC MEETS SUCCESS AT PALITANA

The opening of a Jain Temple at Palitana, a temple town in Gujarat and a place of great significance to Jains was the occasion for this exhibition by **BWC**. The trustees of the temple have been members and staunch supporters of **BWC** for a long time now. In the *Pratishta* ceremony of their temple, they requested **BWC** to put up a stall for the propagation of *ahimsa*, the cornerstone of the Jain religion. **BWC** is grateful to them for their commitment to the cause and for the opportunity given to us to spread it.

Even those strictly vegetarian in food habit are often found to use many articles from animal-derived substances like leather, silk, bone china, and brushes of animal hair. **BWC**'s posters spread awareness about the plight of animals in producing these articles and also of the range of substitutes available. People showed great interest in giving up cruelty-based articles.

We were gratified to have received more than one invitation to put up similar stalls at other festivals.



Interest in our stall was high among visitors and locals alike. Many were drawn to the leatherless wallets and belts we had kept for distribution, and to our colourful, professionally printed vinyl posters on topics like pearls, brushes, leather, and silk. We hope it motivated them to think twice about articles made from those. ✨



Part-time position available:
Sub-Editor, Chief Reporter

Wanted: a team of two people, based in Pune or Bombay, with journalistic talents—amateur or professional—to form our reporting and editing team for all publications, printed or electronic (website). The team would be responsible for producing all the periodical written outputs of **BWC**: our weekly news uploads, our fortnightly email postings, our website columns, our quarterly magazine. Production would include writing, researching, acquiring graphic/text material, layout, etc., and coordinating the printing of the publication. The Sub-Editor would be responsible for drafting the content of the magazine and writing the important articles. The Chief Reporter can expect to make field visits to report on events/issues. The work is not full-time, an adjustable or flexible schedule is possible, if the required output is delivered. Both persons should be excellent at written communication in English and in either one of Hindi or Marathi. Typesetting skills on the computer are essential. Remuneration on a standard level. Please contact us at our Mumbai numbers 2272 2775/6.