

Vol. 28 No 3,4 - Vol. 29 No. 1

# COMPASSIONATE FRIEND



**SOLAPUR  
SLAUGHTER-  
HOUSES  
SANCTION**



*Looking for a saviour*

**Vegetarian  
Communities**

**New  
Column**





# Beauty Without Cruelty - INDIA

An International Educational Charitable Trust for Animal Rights

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(All articles are available in electronic form at [www.bwcindia.org/bwc\\_quarterly/bwc\\_quarterly.htm](http://www.bwcindia.org/bwc_quarterly/bwc_quarterly.htm))

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**BWC's 2006  
CALENDAR**

Now available  
for a donation  
of Rs. 40/-

## WANTED

**Research Officer** to lead the research efforts as well as to maintain and take forward BWC's compiled list (Vegetarian Shopper's Guide) of vegetarian consumer products at Beauty Without Cruelty's Mumbai and Pune offices. A background in the FMCG sector, especially the food and cosmetics industries, would be the most valued asset. Otherwise, Science graduate, possessing good communication skills, oral and written, basic computer knowledge (MS Word, Excel, email, and web browser). Vegetarian preferred.

Interested candidates can call BWC's Mumbai contact numbers 2272 2775/6, or at our Pune Head Office on 0(20) 2687 1166/3420. Resumes are also welcome at [admin@bwcindia.org](mailto:admin@bwcindia.org)

✓ BWC is urgently looking for office premises in Mumbai either on ownership or rental basis or donation, measuring about 500 sq. ft. The preferred locations are those south of Sion (CR) or Mahim (WR). If you know of such property, please contact BWC immediately on 2272 2775/6.

Editor: Dr. Ranjit Konkar Publisher: Diana Ratnagar, Chairperson, Beauty Without Cruelty-India

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This issue catches us in different stages of two different projects: bullock-cart racing in Maharashtra, and a slaughterhouse at Solapur (also in Maharashtra).

Our roles in both these projects are similar. The settings for both are judicio-legislative and both hence involve... politics. Both call for a good amount of awareness-raising. These are situations in which we have over the years performed quite well. Both are projects in which others have taken initiative and **BWC** has lent its resources and skills to assist the effort.

The bullock-cart racing project happened because the sport—very popular in rural Maharashtra—recently came under the judicial gavel and media spotlight for the cruel practices involved in it (to make the animals run) for which the Government was found siding with the animal for once; and Solapur happens to be the site of a proposed slaughterhouse to be built by the Government. **BWC** thus situates itself supporting the Government's stand in the bullock-cart matter and opposing it in the slaughterhouse case. Such are the variety of situations that occur, causing one's partner in one case to be opponent in another.

The contrasting stands of the Government in the two cases arises from the fundamental contradictions in the laws of the country. We have given ourselves a constitutional directive principle that enjoins upon every citizen to have compassion for animals and to behave kindly towards them.

We then give ourselves a law that make it an offence to ill-treat an animal, for example by torturing it in the manner that is done in bullock-cart racing. The animal wins so far. Then the law does a "see-no-evil" and permits the slaughter of the same animal whose ill-treatment while alive it labelled an offence!

The country's law-givers could possibly have claimed helplessness in dictating that the majority change its eating habits (for which the slaughter is happening). But was it unthinkable for it to say *Thus far and no further?* Could it not have said that slaughter will continue but would not be allowed to increase after 26 January, 1950? No new slaughterhouses, in short? Wouldn't that have been the practical balance India could have adopted in the one unique lesson that it has to give to the rest of the world: non-violence towards animals? Instead we have seen each Government outdo the previous one in sending more and more animals to the slaughtering shed. Solapur followed Amravati, and is apparently to be followed by Nagpur and (hold your breath) Pandharpur! How we wish that our laws regarded chopping off the head of a bull as an offence just like whipping the bull is!

From this we also begin a new column called Vegetarian Communities in which we will present to you each time a different community of people in this country which consciously practices vegetarianism even if only during certain times of the year. India possesses no dearth of such communities, and it is our pleasure to share what we find out about the reasons, the motivation, the history and origins of their benevolent practice.

*R.R. Konkar*

Ranjit Konkar, Ph.D.  
Editor

### MAILBOX

I think **Beauty Without Cruelty** has not studied the procedure of manufacturing the "gold/silver beater's skin", which is a base for hammering the gold or silver for making edible varak/leaf. The actual procedure to prepare it differs depending on the country for use of chemicals, but ultimately it is the same worldwide. The silver/gold beater's skin is a prepared film made from the external or peritoneal coat of the coecum or blind gut of ox/cow cattle. Silver is hammered between two skins of ox/cow for more than eight hours, so certainly it is contaminated with micro particles of the skin hence it is not vegetarian. At present machine-

made gold/silver leaves (varak) are available in the Indian and global market, which are also manufactured in India, visit [www.dsgroupindia.com](http://www.dsgroupindia.com) and you may contact them to enjoy the grace of silver and gold varak again.

- Hemendra Kumar Jain

**Editor** - (1) We are trying to get it examined in a laboratory to confirm whether there indeed is tissue stuck to the metal foil. (2) We are in the process of following up on the matter of machine-made foil, thank you for the lead. (3) No comments on the 'grace' of eating silver in the inorganic, mineral form.

Dear Editor,

It pained us, and thousands of bird lovers like us suffered similar pangs, to read your article 'Stop Feeding the Birds'. You have inconsiderately mentioned that 'Pigeons will fend for themselves naturally'. I beg to differ. In today's world where their habitats have been converted to concrete jungles, it is next to impossible to find a grain or a morsel out in the open. It is only due to benevolence of kind-hearted philanthropists, that these innocent creatures will survive today. Pigeon is perhaps one such bird which is believed to be 100% vegetarian, it survives only on grains. It will NEVER consume grain that is infested by insects.

- Hement M Nahar

**Editor** - We are very sorry that Mr. Nahar's sentiments have been hurt by our comment. The virtue of bird feeding is a subjective matter with scope for different opinions. We thank Mr. Nahar for informing us about the pigeon being vegetarian, which we are checking with bird-experts. If true, then indeed the pigeon would be unique among birds whose diets always includes non-plant material.

Dear Editor,

This bears reference to a photograph that won the Pan-Asiatic Epson Colour Imaging Contest 2005. Mangalore's Akhtar Hussain won the prize for his entry, "Kambla, the Buffalo Race."

The picture shows two buffaloes being goaded and beaten in order to win the race. One of the buffaloes has its eyes closed—probably in anticipation of yet another blow, as a man stands behind it holding aloft a wicked-looking stick. The other buffalo is full of stress and fear, as indicated by the whites of its eyes. It is being ridden by a man who is yelling at it. No doubt, human beings derive a depraved thrill out of watching animals race and fight one another. Nevertheless, such speciesism and callousness towards the suffering of helpless creatures cannot be termed ethical on the part of humankind. Had I been a judge at that contest, I certainly would not have rewarded a spectacle of cruelty with a prize.

- Christine Krishnasami

**Editor** - Thank you for bringing this to our attention. The issues you address in this matter—that of intimidation and torture of animals in making them run—are the very ones we

are working on in the matter of bullock cart racing in Maharashtra. If you can send us contact information for Pan-Asiatic Epson Colour Imaging Contest 2005 or Akhtar Hussain we would certainly send a letter of protest ourselves for what it is worth. Your reply is itself very well-worded. We hope you wrote on your part.

Dear Editor,

I received 2 packages from **BWC** just now; the calendar and the Compassionate Friend. Thank you very much for sending these to me. Liked the calendar this year very much. Felt so sad when I saw the smaller picture of the skinned calf. A powerful reminder to us to be more thoughtful consumers.

- Margaret

**Editor** - Thanks to **In Defense of Animals** for the detection and photo-investigation of the skinned calves. The report is given on the inside back cover.

Dear Sirs,

I am happy to tell you that our mission was a great success. The huge gathering of pooja has been changed into real vegetarian kalachakra as we dreamt for. Please visit our website for more details as I cannot write here all. Visit [www.LoveAnimal.org](http://www.LoveAnimal.org) I really did well all works and we also properly distributed your materials to interested persons and organizations and also arranged a photo-exhibition of pictures including yours. I herewith send you few pictures for your kind information. I also put the title of your association (Beauty Without Cruelty) alongwith website address amidst the exhibition which is useful for people who are interested. Please keep in touch.

Rapsel Tsariva

President-Tibetan Volunteers for Animals

**Editor** - Reading about the Buddhist community's experiments with vegetarianism gives us the relief and delight of watching long-separated mother and child being reunited. Buddha would bless you from His heavenly abode for adopting after the passage of two millennia the lifestyle enshrined in the first lesson to a newly converted monk - "I shall have compassion and loving kindness for all living beings and shall protect them."



Know of a community which as a group practises vegetarianism, even if for limited periods? For example, the Jains, the Gujaratis, the Marwaris, the Agarwals, the Naamdhari Sikhs, the Vaishnavs. We are sure there are many more. Send us detailed information on their geographical spread, origins of their vegetarianism, beliefs, traditions, practices, etc. If you are a good writer, you be the author! We will gladly print your name.

# THE BISHNOI OF INDIA

## *Living in Harmony*

*Is it possible for people in this day and age to generously overlook animals raiding their crop, and instead think of the rampage as an act of sharing?*



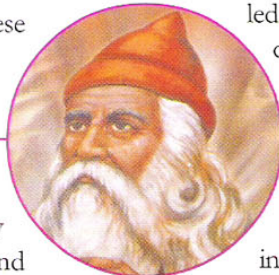
Yes, such people do exist. These modern-day saints, as it would be necessary to call them for the hardship which they voluntarily endure just in order to live up to their ideals of safeguarding Nature's creation, are known as the *Bishnoi*.

Settled across the northwestern states of India, mainly Rajasthan but including Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, rural *Bishnoi* lead a lifestyle of gruelling simplicity and non-consumptiveness to the extent of seeming deprivation, and yet possess a fiercely pro-active attitude towards conserving nature. The *Bishnoi* community is the only one known to us which is activist in Nature- and wildlife-protection. Conservation of Nature for the *Bishnoi* is not a matter of kill-only-as-much-as-you-need. It is no-kill. Simple. In bleak, gruelling environments where rural or tribal communities usually succumb to the temptation of hunting, the *Bishnoi* are strict (though lacto-) vegetarians.

Did you know that in a *Bishnoi* village no one shrinks away in fear at the sight of a herbivorous wild animal strolling in the backyard or lazily grazing in the farmlands? That these are the places where women are known to have suckled motherless fawns (young of deer), where hundreds have died to save trees, and people go hungry to provide food for animals? In fact, every member of the *Bishnoi* community nurtures trust in the hearts of animals. Animals not surprisingly learn to recognize these 'green villages' as their haven.

### *The Father of the Faith*

Jambhaji, or Jambheshwar Bhagavan, (Fig. 2) born in 1451 in one of the warrior sects of Rajasthan, was disillusioned by communal riots between Muslim invaders and the native Hindus. The communal rift and ensuing disharmony however, proved to be an inspiration for Jambhaji who swore to restore the lost harmony and balance. He realized his dream in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, by



giving birth to the *Bishnoi* faith, a faith of peace. The religion gets its name from the Indian words *bees* (twenty) and *noi* (nine) after the 29 principles he propounded which stress a strictly *saatvic* (simple) life by adopting compassion for all living beings, cleanliness, devotion, vegetarian diet and truthfulness.

### *It's always greener on the Bishnoi side*

The *Bishnoi* worship Nature in all its manifestations, be it the Earth's green cover or its magnificent wild creatures. Long before the labels of 'environmentalist' and 'animal rights activist' came into being, they were already practicing the principles behind these labels in unimaginably courageous ways. The hair stands on end to hear of the exploits and sacrifices of this community for causes for which we all run to the police or the courts or the legislatures today. One of their bravest and most spoken-about protests is the Khejari Sacrifice, the mother of today's Chipko movement, in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Rajasthan.

The story has it that in order to prevent trees from being felled on the orders of the *Maharaja* Abhay Singh of Jodhpur, more than 366 *Bishnoi* women led by Amrita Devi stood between the woodcutters and the trees, embracing the trees at their trunks. In what deserves to go down as the most horrendous act of barbarism ever, it is said that the soldiers turned their axes on the hapless women, chopped them down with the trees! This murder of the innocent for a cause so noble, remembered till date as the great Khejari Sacrifice, apparently impacted the *Maharaja* himself so greatly that in a manner reminiscent of Emperor Ashoka repenting the pyrrhic

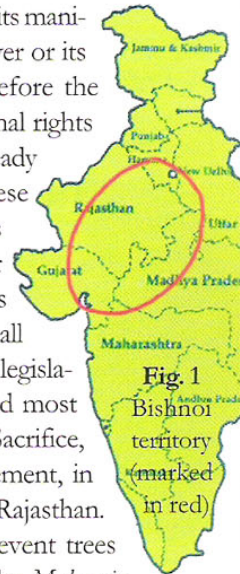


Fig. 1  
Bishnoi territory (marked in red)

Fig. 2

victory at the battle of Kalinga, he sent out a strong royal decree preventing the cutting of any trees anywhere in *Bishnoi* villages. *Bishnoi* villages have display boards with the sayings of Guru Jambheshwar like *Sar Saantey Rookh Rabe To Bhi Sasto Jaan* (If a tree is saved even at the cost of one's head, consider it worth it). The community has, for decades, been vehemently protecting trees in and around its settlements.

### *Life on the Wild Side*

The undaunted *Bishnoi* spirit has protected the rights of many a wild animal species as well. The *Bishnoi* hold animals to be sacred. It is said that before he passed away, Jambhaji instructed his followers to revere the blackbuck as his manifestation. Ever since, the community looks upon hunting the blackbuck as killing their Guru. Ask a *Bishnoi* and he or she will openly profess that the safety and well-being of the blackbuck is more important than that of even his or her own children and family. This sentiment has proven to be more forceful than any Wildlife Protection Act of our Parliament. It is no surprise that the Indian Government relies heavily upon this vigilant community to help keep track of under-cover poaching activity. Hunters who have been hunted down and treated to *Bishnoi* justice don't dare venture back in search of game. It

is the *Bishnoi* whose path Salman Khan crossed in getting caught hunting blackbuck, for which he is to live out a year in jail!

### *Bishnoi activism*

*Not just live-and-let-live, not even just live-and-help-live, but live-and-help-live-and-don't-let-kill — that is the Bishnoi creed.*

The community is also battling it out with the authorities, trying to prevent the granting of licenses to kill animals. Not so long ago, the *Bishnoi* had protested bitterly against farmers near Fatehabad electrocuting the *Neelgaaya* to stop them from ravaging their crops—a *mahapanchayat* of neighbouring *Bishnoi* villages ordained a fine of Rs. 5,100 on the accused for laying an electric wire in the field. The *Bishnoi* are also preparing to raise a hue and cry over the Punjab Government's proposal to grant licenses to kill the *Neelgaaya*. Given the perseverance and the influence of the community, the outcome can be expected to be in favour of the animals. When the *Bishnoi* speak for mute animals, they usually get heard. The animals may be mute, but the *Bishnoi* are not.

Our own experience with this exceptional community has strengthened our faith in them. **BWC** owes its success in getting the export of frog legs banned in 1987 greatly to the help we received from the *Bishnoi* community bowing to whose pressure Shri Bhajan Lal, the erstwhile Union Minister for Environment and Forests, announced the ban at a *Bishnoi* gathering in Mukkam village. In 1988, again the community's strong religious beliefs proved to be life-saving for innocent 4-day-old Karakul lambs which used to be slaughtered for the making of fur caps. The *Bishnois* fought tooth and nail along with Shri Bhajan Lal, and forced the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to altogether scrap their Karakul lamb project.

### *A day in the life of a Bishnoi*

*These extraordinary and exemplary qualities of this community set standards of behaviour for all other people claiming to work or care for animals. If a hungry rustic in Rajasthan can die for trees or animals, can we not at least take the trouble of rescuing animals from danger in the comfort of our own towns?*

The lives of the *Bishnoi* are very intricately connected with trees...their livelihood depends on them. Many *Bishnois* are expert wood-carvers and carpenters. This must make us wonder - Wood carving? But isn't it against Jambaji's 29 principles to cut trees?. "We never cut trees," explains a *Bishnoi*, "We wait till a tree dies on its own or falls down during a storm." Besides wood-carvers one also finds stone-carvers, goldsmiths, milkmen, and farmers. *Bishnoi* farmers are known for their endless reserves of patience. To begin with, they have only four months of farming. And even in these few months, their crop is susceptible to being consumed by wild deer. But one would never find a farmer chasing away the animals. "We believe in the co-existence of life. For us, animals are the *avatars* of divinity," says Bana Ram. "Our guru said that those who die saving innocent animals or trees will go to heaven. We would willingly go hungry to feed the animals." These are the words and sentiments of the *Bishnoi on the street*, mind you. Even if he practices only half of what he espouses, it is still more than what most of us caught in the humdrum of daily existence can claim to practise. And this sentiment doesn't limit itself to words only. In the water-starved desert, each *Bishnoi* family creates a tank in their field to provide water for deer in the arid summer months. Here is a lifestyle most would

*contd. on Pg. 9*

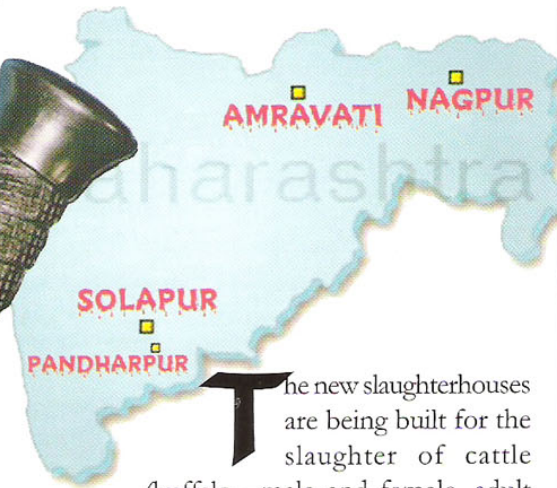


Solapur, the city of temples, the abode of Siddheshwar, today stands the risk of defilement. Defilement not just of the physical environment of the city, but of its spiritual environment as well. In 2005, the Solapur Municipal Corporation (SMC) decided to gift to the city two brand-new, mechanized slaughterhouses, one run

# Serial killings

Blowing the dust off long forgotten plans, it revived them to announce the building of these slaughter-houses near Mulegaon Tanda village on the outskirts of the city. The land had been acquired by the SMC for 'development' purposes in 1996. The face of the development is revealing itself today.

by SMC itself, one by a private party.



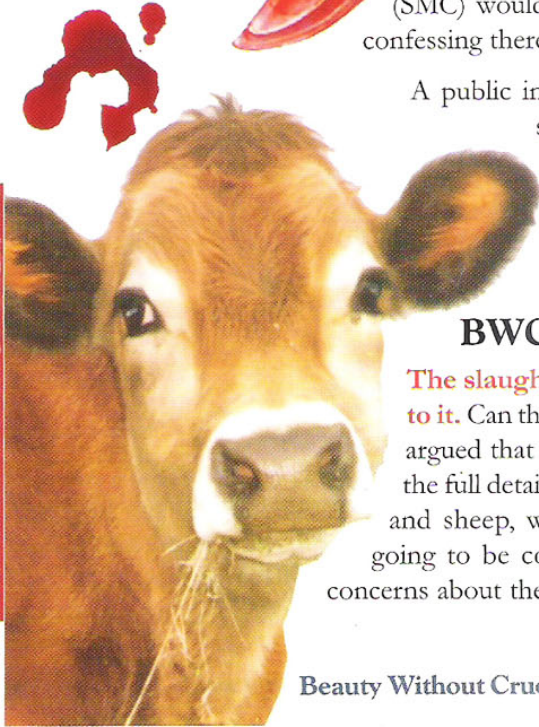
# in Solapur

The new slaughterhouses are being built for the slaughter of cattle (buffalo—male and female, adult and young; cow—male (*i.e.*, bull) only, adult and young), goat, and sheep. In the old slaughterhouses, only goat and sheep were slaughtered. Cattle slaughter used to happen in other parts of town illegally. The new slaughterhouses are being touted as export earners. The old ones had been built to meet domestic 'demand.' The Corporation has projected this effort as a mere 'shifting' of Solapur's existing slaughterhouses from within city limits to its outskirts. It cites protests from the residents of Bapujinagar area of the city to the sights, smells, and sounds of slaughter as reason for doing so. On the face of it, such a goal would not seem objectionable, even though **BWC** devoutly wishes that all slaughterhouses actually close down some day. SMC even claims that once these new slaughterhouses get built, it (SMC) would force all illegal slaughter across the city to shut down (implicitly confessing thereby that currently it is 'allowing' it to go on?).

A public interest litigation filed by people living at the proposed site of the slaughterhouse was unfortunately if predictably dismissed by the bench of Justices Lodha and Karnik at the High Court of Mumbai. This caused a severe setback to the case since the doors of judicial justice were then closed. **BWC** feels that there was a lack of competence in the lawyer representing the PIL.

## BWC's objections and apprehensions

The slaughterhouse is being built in defiance of local people's opposition to it. Can their resolution, signed by 2/3<sup>rd</sup> villagers, be ignored? It will be correctly argued that the villagers gave their consent some years ago. But were they told the full details of the project at that time? Were they told that cattle, not just goats and sheep, would also be slaughtered? Were they told how much water was going to be consumed? Now that they have obtained the facts and have new concerns about the project, do they not deserve another hearing?



The rampant slaughter of cattle, the proliferation of unlicensed butcher shops is evidence of the Administration's incapacity and unwillingness to control illegal slaughter. It does not make us believe that conditions will be different for the new slaughterhouse. Let the administration demonstrate their capacity and willingness to control illegal slaughter by stopping all of it that happens, before taking on the building of a new slaughterhouse.

Even after closing down the Bapujinagar slaughterhouse, the city seems to be going on fine with a greatly downscaled supply of meat. Where is the claimed demand for meat that the administration wants to meet? The fact is that when meat is not available, people make do perfectly with the available vegetables. Possibly they may even report better health as a result if kept up for a long enough period. In other words, if people are getting along fine without eating flesh, why introduce an expanded capacity for it? It seems a reduced capacity is fine. This point is relevant because the production of meat requires the butchery of animals which is so strongly objectionable to the sensitivities of the common man.

## The Solapur Slaughterhouse Project

A shift in location or policies?

May the Government answer-

- Instead of putting a stop to the open illegal slaughter, why is the slaughter capacity being further increased?
- How has the slaughter of bulls and buffaloes—illegal up to now—suddenly been permitted?
- Where is the need to export meat? Is it something we can hold our heads high for?

Yesterday Amaravati, today Solapur, tomorrow Nagpur. What next? Pandharpur? Kashi-Dwarka-Badri-Kedar? Don't turn India's agriculture-based economy into a blood-based one.

Convey your protest to 2740310 today.

Issued in public interest by **Beauty Without Cruelty**

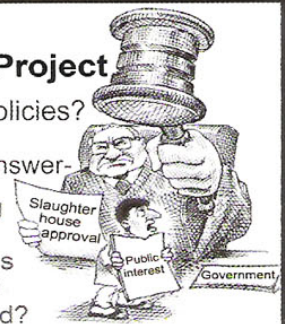


Fig. 2: Ad released by BWC in Solapur newspaper on day 2

The administration is misleading the public by raising the bogey of "demand" for meat from the public. The fact is that just like presence of a gutkha or liquor unit will automatically generate the demand for it in the locality, similarly the demand for meat will increase if a slaughterhouse is opened.

Just like the Bapunagar slaughterhouse was shut down on objection of the residents near it, why are the residents of the new location not given similar hearing? Because they are not creating a threat to the law and order situation yet? Does it take such a threat to win the administration's sympathies?

If the slaughterhouse project is undertaken as merely a 'shift,' then why are additional species—buffaloes and bulls—being introduced for slaughter where these weren't before?

After doing nothing to check the illegal cattle slaughter that was rampant, it appears that the administration is now trying to skirt its obligations by making it legal! Is it the privilege of one section of society whom the administration is afraid to confront for threat of violence that will be received from them,

**Where is the Maharastrian man stepping?**

**Centre's gift to Solapur -**

Slaughterhouses—not one but two— to slay bullocks, buffaloes, goats, and sheep.

**Do we really have a need for these?**

Possible repercussions on Solapur district—wiping out of animal wealth, jobs as butchers, water shortage, spread of diseases.

**Do we want such a 'gift'?**

Convey your protest to 2740310 today.

Issued in public interest by **Beauty Without Cruelty**

Fig. 1: Ad released by BWC in Solapur newspaper on day 1



that when they do not obey a certain law the law is changed, but if peace-loving, law-abiding citizens want the law enforced, they can be given no satisfactory answer?

**Cattle is very important for farming; its slaughter is a violation in spirit of the Maharashtra Animal Preservation Act.** It appears as if the demand from overseas is the driving factor for this. **BWC** strongly objects to butchering the cattle that India needs—*alive*—for tilling her fields, for their organic manure, and for the pharmaceutical value of their urine.

**The slaughter of bulls is especially a violation in spirit of the anti-cow slaughter act implemented by the spiritual fathers of our country.** It also ignores the 25-year long satyagrah started by Vinoba Bhave and being conducted to this day with utmost patience and non-violence outside Deonar slaughterhouse to press for the complete end to all slaughter of cow progeny. It is morally binding upon the court to look upon the spiritual climate of the country; law cannot be interpreted in a spiritual vacuum. It is the spirit of the law as much as its letter that must be followed. Preservation of cow progeny is mentioned in our constitution as one of the directive principles of state policy. It should have been the Government's efforts to set up shelters and insurance schemes for cattle. Instead of setting up cattle slaughter plants in Solapur and across the state and country in a mockery of its people's aspirations, a slap in the face of our founding fathers by the Government.

**BWC strongly objects to the very idea of killing animals for earning foreign exchange.** As if it is not bad enough that daily we conduct executions that we dare not even watch but which we have given ourselves the self-proclaimed right to do so by paying someone to do it, we are now going to earn mockery from the importing countries for butchering and killing the very animals we worship on good days.

**Opening a new slaughterhouse for export will result in healthy cattle being sold for slaughter just for the immediate and lucrative returns,** resulting in a depletion of animal wealth. A tempting pull factor of easy money will be created which the local cattle owners will be unable to resist. Why is the Government placing this temptation in their path, knowing fully well that they would easily succumb to it?

**The Solapur Slaughterhouses Project :**

Wiseness or Foolishness?

Amount sown in the project—Rs. 6.5 Crores.

The common man gets — a measly few lakhs! And lots of bone powder based toothpaste, tallow soaps and medicines of blood.

**The largest product of the slaughterhouses — flesh of bulls.**

The one animal that carries India's agriculture and transport on its strong shoulders— the bull!

**Water usage for project — 77,000 litres per day**

One of Maharashtra's water-starved districts — Solapur

Is this not utter foolishness? You decide.

Convey your protest to 2740310 today.

Issued in public interest by **Beauty Without Cruelty**

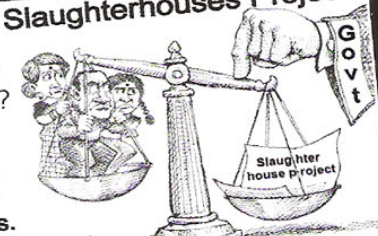


Fig. 3: Ad released by **BWC** in Solapur newspaper on day 3

**The conditions of fly infestation reported by a TV channel in a village just outside Solapur** because of a neighboring poultry farm is a harbinger of the kind of things that can happen to the villages surrounding the slaughterhouse. It is one of the things that came to light only recently, causing the villagers to reconsider their earlier decision to permit the building of the slaughterhouse.

## Goals of BWC

1. To get the new slaughterhouse projects cancelled.
2. To get the Administration to stop cattle slaughter in the city. Cattle slaughter is illegal.
3. To get the Administration to stop all other illegal (unlicensed) slaughter in the city before it talks of shifting the slaughterhouse into the backyard of unwilling villagers.

If the above goals are not achieved and the new slaughterhouse is gone ahead and built, then to insist upon the court to at least give following conditions for operation:



1. To get cattle off the list of slaughter animals in the new project.
2. To not allow export of meat. Export markets artificially hike up the demand for killing.
3. To ensure that not a single animal more than the capacity installed is killed. To allow **BWC** to post its monitor there.
4. To ensure that slaughter laws are stringently enforced.
5. To ask for the municipal-run slaughterhouse to be built of glass walls.
6. To ask for the municipal run slaughterhouse to be open to the public at any time.
7. To allow photography inside the slaughterhouse.
8. To ask every person who has sanctioned the project to visit with his family the slaughterhouse at Deonar, Mumbai, to witness slaughter of animals.

### Awareness-rising efforts

In a joint effort, Pashudhan Bachao Samiti of Solapur and **BWC** planned a campaign for raising awareness in Solapur. **BWC** helped make the matter very visible in the local media through posting three advertisements (Figs. 1, 2 and 3; originals in Marathi, refer to [www.bwcindia.org/campaigns/solapur-slaughterhouses-campaign.htm](http://www.bwcindia.org/campaigns/solapur-slaughterhouses-campaign.htm)) in the local daily newspaper of the highest readership, *Dainik Lokmat*. These advertisements were intended to be informative and not just provocative, since many people in Solapur were not even aware of the slaughterhouse project. That the advertisements were successful was proven to our great joy by the report of the Mayor's office at SMC being so inundated with calls from people expressing their protest that the office placed their phones off the hook!

### At the moment of going to press...

The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board has *temporarily withdrawn its permission* to the SMC to build the slaughterhouse. This success came after members of the village panchayat went to the MPCB office in Mumbai demanding that the Board revoke its sanction to build. The lion's share of this

credit for this breakthrough goes to Sandeep Vaidya, a member of **BWC** from Amravati, who has worked tirelessly from the very start of this campaign, leaving his residence at Amravati and shifting base to Solapur just for the purpose, and leading the fight against the slaughterhouse while maintaining the strict regimen of a Jain monk-aspirant. His discipline and total dedication to the cause are something we commend him for.

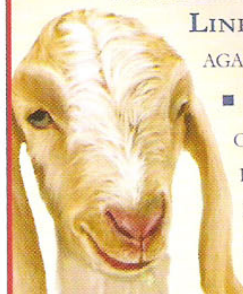
### The role of the Ruling Party's manifesto

The impetus for these projects to have come up now rather than later seemed to be a notice from the State Government that funds earmarked for building of the slaughterhouses had to be picked up by the SMC within a stipulated time or be forfeited. Readers will remember that in the year 2000, **BWC** had spearheaded a campaign to make the Government withdraw from the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan of India proposals aiming to boost the meat industry in the country. The success of that time has proved to be short-lived: the same proposals are now being introduced into the country except outside the Five-Year Plan framework.

Another evidence of the Party agendas coming in the way of giving the issue a decision in our favour was the reluctance of the corporators at SMC—the people's representatives—to bring up the matter in the Council Hall for debate. Even after the local people protesting the slaughterhouse plans taking to the streets in a peaceful *marcha*, the corporators shied away from tabling the issue for debate, since doing so might have been to the displeasure of their party's wishes. The issue had become a victim of political agendas of parties and vote banks—the ruling party unwilling to do anything to alienate the people engaged in the meat business, those being one of their important vote banks.

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

■ WRITE AND EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN TO SOLAPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, INDRA BHAVAN, PUNYASHLOK APPASAHEB VARAD RD. RAILWAY LINES, SOLAPUR 413 001. PROTEST AGAINST THE UPCOMING SLAUGHTERHOUSES.



■ IF YOU ARE IN SOLAPUR, TAKE CHARGE AND ORGANISE AN AWARENESS-RAISER SESSION TO WHICH YOU COULD INVITE YOUR NEIGHBOURS OR YOUR ENTIRE SOCIETY.



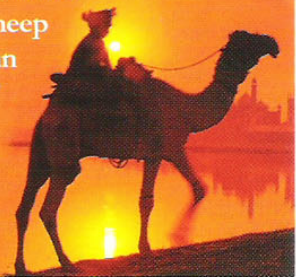
# CAMEL SLAUGHTER

Mr. P Krishnan - (BWC Life Member)  
Ernakulam

In November 2005, some of us BWC members in Kochi found that two camels had been brought into Kochi by one M K Siraj for slaughtering and feasting on camel meat during Ramzan Id festivities. Furious at the news, we, along with other animal welfare activists, approached the district authorities and Kochi Corporation who, sensing public sentiment, imposed a ban on the slaughter. The matter soon became well-publicised and contentious with Mr. Siraj adamant that there was no provision for any authority to ban the killing. He approached the Kerala High Court to settle his claim. In the 2-3 months period leading to the judgement, one of the two camels died from adverse living conditions and improper diet. The Honourable Court, to the great delight of activists in Kochi, pronounced on 5th December 2005 that the animal could not be allowed to be killed on the grounds that a) there was a provision for slaughtering only cattle, goat, sheep and pigs within the corporation limits b) there was no qualified veterinarian who could certify the fitness of a camel for slaughter or the suitability of its meat for consumption by human beings, c) there was no person licensed to slaughter camels or d) to sell its meat.

(Camel Case WP (C) No. 30764 of 2005 in Kerala High Court. Kochi.)

For original judgement, refer to [www.bwcindia.org/camel case.pdf](http://www.bwcindia.org/camel case.pdf)



contd. from Pg. 4

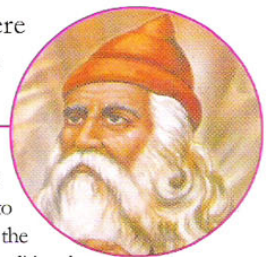
term Herculean, but to the *Bishnoi* it remains routine. And how do they get their milk? We learnt on our visit to *Bishnoi* land in Rajasthan<sup>1</sup> last year that they have been practising for centuries the spirit of the very principles on which the modern vegan movement is based, *viz.*, not causing deprivation to the calf. One old woman when asked by us whether they fed their kid goats replied, almost indignantly, “*Usee ke liye to uski maa doodh deti hai!*” (the kid is whom the mother gives the milk for!). Very heartening to hear it from a villager who in another part of India would have starved the male calf and sold the milk for a better life.

What great lengths this brave and conscientious group of people will go to in order to protect the priceless gifts of Nature! Some of us (usually those who do *nothing*) might dismiss their efforts as a drop in the ocean, saying they are only one community fighting against the tide of the times. And indeed their strength does not come from their numbers. It comes instead from the strength of a group of

fired-up individuals. The teachings of Jambhaji were so powerful that they snatched Hindus and Muslims alike out of the clutches of communal riots and inspired them to embrace a kinder, better way of life.

We hope this community flourishes in its rural habitat. The simplicity they practice there is in contrast with their city cousins, and is forced by poverty to a large extent. As more and more of rural India migrates to the cities in search of a better life, we fear for the Nature left behind. Who will be its guardian? Where would be the custodians of the values that guard it?

<sup>1</sup> Bishnoi territory is easy to reach from Jodhpur in Rajasthan, in fact, tour operators from the city run excursions to their villages to show people their way of living, the site of the Khejari massacre, wildlife around the area, traditional craft, and so forth. Complete with sharing their traditional meal of *keer-saangri* with them. The offices of Rajasthan Tourism would be a good source of information about such tours.



# Bullock cart racing

*...reaches the finish line*

**B**ullock-cart racing has been outlawed in the state of Maharashtra. By the stroke of a pen.

The events that triggered this unusual and unexpected decision on the part of a usually bearish government seem to have been the following: *i*) a judgement of the Aurangabad Bench of the Mumbai High Court holding the Government responsible for the ill-treatment of animals in sports such as “bull fights, bullock-cart races and all other fights of like nature involving animals,” and asking them to immediately take steps to prevent such cruelties, and *ii*) a letter from the Animal Welfare Board of India to the Animal Husbandry Departments of all states bringing to their attention that it had been receiving various complaints from all quarters about cruelties in bullock cart racing and asking them to enforce the High Court’s judgement referred to above.

A circular issued in Marathi subsequently by the Government of Maharashtra (visit [www.bwcindia.org/ban\\_on\\_bullock\\_cart\\_race.htm](http://www.bwcindia.org/ban_on_bullock_cart_race.htm)) declared bullock-cart racing prohibited (copy enclosed for members in Maharashtra).

A lone, self-motivated Superintendent of Police of Pune district started enforcing the prohibition order *on his own initiative*, an unheard-of wonder in Indian law-enforcement. Going from village to village ordering races stopped, he unfortunately caused great resentment to be built up against his literal interpretation of the Government circular. A big episode of stone-throwing, smashing of property, and injuries to policemen resulted at the site of a disallowed race, resulting in villagers and their legislative representatives deciding to take the matter to court.

A public interest litigation was filed on behalf of two villagers asking for the Government’s circular to be held invalid and to order it revoked.

In another stroke of marvellous fortune, the Court of Judges Palshikar and (Mrs.) Mhatre who heard this petition struck it down in its very second hearing, when the petitioners’ lawyers could not satisfy the judge about what fundamental right they possessed to conduct the races. Justice Palshikar struck us at **BWC** as a judge who has seen a bullock-cart race or two and who knows what goes on there and was therefore determined to

quash the petitioners' stand. After an initial hearing on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006 in which he had made his personal dislike of the 'sport' amply clear, he pronounced on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006 that the petitioners were "allowed to withdraw the writ petition with liberty to take such steps as are advised."

**BWC** was present in court with Advocate Raju Moray on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006 ready to step in on behalf of the Animal Welfare Board of India which was also a party to the matter. Having coordinated with the AWBI to be its representative, we were carrying our laptop loaded with a video presentation of cruelties in races and with copies of still photographs showing similar scenes, but were not called upon to exhibit them. In fact, Justice Palshikar very scornfully refused permission to the petitioners to exhibit *their* video of no-cruelty-in-races, as an impropriety in court.

The days between 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006 and today have seen various news of the petitioners approaching Government authorities upto the highest figure, the Chief Minister himself, to press for revoking of the circular. Fortunately to no avail yet. It is to be hoped that the situation continues. This period has also seen many races planned to take place, threatening situations develop and come



to the brink of a law and order situation, but for the law of the land to ultimately prevail in most instances. We are pleased to report an especially courageous sit-in effort organised with great success by Mr. Ashish Goswami at Wardha where a race was being readied upto the last moment but was withdrawn in the face of this protest. It is learnt that Mrs. Maneka Gandhi stepped in with her executive powers to stop the transfer of the Superintendent of Police of Wardha District and enabled him to enforce the law.

If eternal vigilance is the price of democracy (to quote Nehru), then so is it in the matter of preventing clandestine cruelty to animals.

## WHAT YOU

- The Police Superintendent mentioned above continues to be under great pressure to not take action against scheduled races. Please call him, write to him, visit him in Pune (Office of Superintendent of Police, Pune District, Chavan Nagar, Pashan Road, Pune 411 008. *Tel:* 0(20) 25657878) to personally congratulate him for his courageous and principled stand in the matter.
- Write articles to the press and letters to editors pointing out cruelties that happen in these races. You may read our previous issues



## CAN DO

on this matter (*Compassionate Friend Vol 24 No.1 Winter 2000-Spring 2001 and CF Vol 24 No.2-4 Summer - Winter 2001*) or visit our website ([www.bwcindia.org/ban\\_on\\_bullock\\_cart\\_racing.pdf](http://www.bwcindia.org/ban_on_bullock_cart_racing.pdf)) to learn more.

- Form a group that will agree to be present as a protest at the site of the races. The above-mentioned SP could be asked to oblige with police protection to your group. Write to us if you have such a group willing. You would receive great encouragement and reward for this activity.





# To fly or not to fly...

BWC set up an 'Injured Bird Treatment Camp' on 14th January 2006 manned by our own staff as well as two doctors from the Bombay Veterinary College, at Dadar Kabutarkhana, Mumbai. However, our zeal and preparedness for service to the birds stayed largely unutilized, since not many cases of injuries were being reported in the Dadar area, even though the incidence of kite-flying was high, what with kite-flying contests organized by almost all big newspapers. We attribute the reason to what we have earlier proposed as a solution to the problem, viz, that the kites were being flown on open grounds away from tall buildings and populated areas. Hardly one injury case arose and was brought to us, despite constant announcements at the contest venues about our camp nearby. Even though our preparations turned out underutilized, we are happy that the reason was not apathy but a fortuitous occurrence of the right conditions.

BWC would like to convey its gratitude to **Mr. Ketan Vora, Mr. Parmar and, Mr. Pardawala** for their generous donations towards sponsoring our camp.



"Cause God created us,  
to live peacefully with animals  
and not for us to kill  
and behave like cannibals"



- In Loving Memory of **Abhishek C Rathod** (26 July 1989 - 8 February 2005)

Message sponsored by the Rathod family

## New-born calves skinned alive for leather

Mid-Day, September 3, 2005

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Mahim creek has turned into a graveyard for newborn calves. Speaking to Mid-Day, Fizzah Shah, President, IDA revealed, "When we visited the creek, it was heart-rending to see the bodies of the newborn calves, their legs tied up with strings and wires, stripped of

skin." Cattle owners based in Goregaon, Jogeshwari and Malad sell these calves to leather traders for Rs 5,000 to Rs 7,000. Butchers then slit the animals' throats and dump the half-dead calves near the Mahim creek from the train. The area has witnessed a rise in incidents of diseases like dengue, malaria, and various respiratory problems. Residents say that the live calves are stuffed into gunny bags and thrown out of the trains in the early morning hours. As soon as the train passes, some men from Dharavi area take the calves into the tall grass and peel their skin, leaving the animals in pain. The calves cry out in pain but no one comes to their rescue as these men are armed and we fear for our lives," says Aslam.

**Editor - A picture sent to us by Fizzah Shah is attached. All calves were male!!! Because they are uneconomical to keep. Why? Because they want to drink their mother's milk...Why not? Because we take it...probably from dairies that give us the milk that the calves need!**

## Dalai Lama against KFC

<http://www.kentuckyfriedcruelty.com/dalailama.asp?c=114>

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After receiving an appeal from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, KFC has abandoned plans to open its first restaurant in Tibet. The victory comes after international media coverage of His Holiness' appeal, including this story from the BBC.

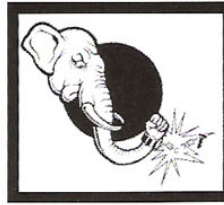


**Editor - It comes as a relief to read that the Dalai Llama has put the animals' plight above the inconvenience of his mountain people getting plant-based food.**

## Animal acts banned in Croatia

<http://www.prijatelj-zivotinja.hr/animalist/23en.html>

.....



Mursko Sredisce is the first Croatian town which banned circuses with animal acts! The ban is in force since 10 October 2005 and it came as a result of four years of

intensive campaigning of Animal Friends Croatia against circuses with animal acts. Animal Friends Croatia will continue to campaign against circuses with animal acts, and a few other Croatian towns already said that they might follow the example of Mursko Sredisce!



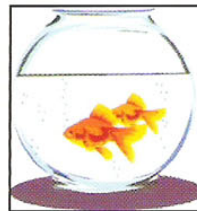
**Editor - Italy, Croatia... countries with little or no spiritual heritage regarding animals pass laws banning cruelty to them. With our greatly flaunted heritage, we are building slaughterhouses!!**



## Spherical Fish bowls banned

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9814628>

.....



The classic spherical fish bowls are banned in Rome under a new by-law which also stops fish or other animals being given away as fairground prizes. It comes after a national law

was passed to allow jail sentences for people who abandon cats or dogs.

The newspaper reported that round bowls caused fish to go blind. No one at Rome council was available to confirm this was why they were banned. Many fish experts say round bowls provide insufficient oxygen for fish.

# BE VEGETARIAN

Only few of us  
die from bird flu...  
but billions of us  
from your non-veg menu



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