

Vol. 29 No 2 - 4



# COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY - INDIA

They have the power to change a game !

BWC's  
Root for  
Vegetarianism  
Poster Competition  
Pg.10



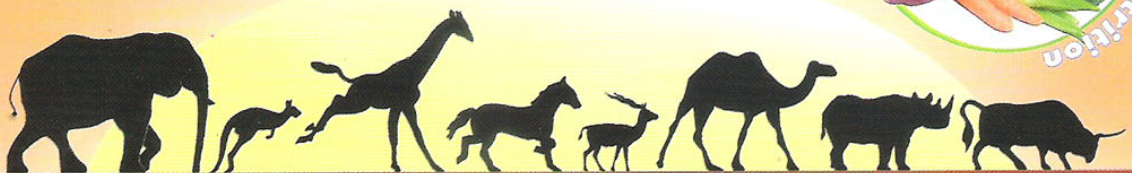
Do you have it in you ?

## BE VEGETARIAN

★ Positions Available:  
See back inside cover

INSIDE: **Free poster on Vegetarian Nutrition**

The **Vegetarian 9**  
to keep you healthy & fine





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## *BWC's Mumbai office has moved*

**BWC's** Mumbai office has moved...to a bigger, more functional office space in Shivaji Park. As with the last office, some very generous members have come to our rescue by donating space to **BWC**. In a city where real estate rivals gold in investment value, we deeply appreciate and thank them for their generosity. And the address beats the previous P.J. Towers in convenience of location and reachability if not in fame. The new office was inaugurated on 11th September to become functional on **BWC's** birthday. To celebrate the inauguration and our birthday, we had invited members who have been actively involved in **BWC** activities recently and in the past. *Our new address is: 201 Sumati Niwas, Sena Bhavan Path, Dadar (W), Mumbai. Tel: 2421 1511.* We are hoping to see you or hear from you soon, especially those volunteers who can help us with our work.

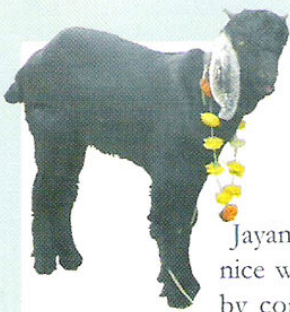


## **Beauty Without Cruelty - INDIA**

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie, Pune 411 040 Tel: 0(20) 2686 1166

Telefax: 0(20) 2686 0016 Website: [www.bwcindia.org](http://www.bwcindia.org) e-mail: [admin@bwcindia.org](mailto:admin@bwcindia.org)





The occurrence of Dussehra on Gandhi

Jayanti this year provided us a very nice way of celebrating the latter—by contributing a little to a cause about which Gandhiji had expressed both his wish that people would do something, and his regret at his own inability to do anything (see box on page 14). The cause was Animal Sacrifice. There are not many things that the Mahatma would have been unable to do if he had given himself to the task, and he surely underestimated his own powers in this regard. Or maybe his complete preoccupation with the agenda of India's freedom left little time for other such causes also dear to him. Whatever the reason, **Beauty Without Cruelty** considers it its honour this Dussehra to have filled, to however minute an extent, the space left by Gandhiji for work by others. The details are to be found in the article on page 12.

A word about the Gandhian-ness of this exercise. The issue was certainly one on which we know Gandhiji to have shared our concern. And the outcome of the exercise would also, we think, have drawn a pat on the back from him. But we do not claim to have used 'Gandhian' means to achieve the result.

For 'Gandhian means' necessarily imply the conversion of the adversary to your point of view purely through openness, trust, patience, love, and moral persuasion. Our action was a law-enforcement exercise, using that arm of the state machinery most alien to Gandhiji's methods: the Police.

However, we feel our recourse to the law-enforcement machinery was justified because we feel that in a civilised society all should live by the rules of the society and not hurt common sentiments. Animal sacrifice hurts the sentiments of a lot of people, who view it as unacceptable barbarism in today's age, something that should be allowed no place in contemporary human society.

Also, enforcement by the Police is not always

an exercise in brute force, even though it may not be a *satyagrah*. It is about reminding people, sternly if necessary and under threat of punishment, about their obligations to a law-abiding society. Traffic rules are to be obeyed; society has decreed a fine for the one jumping the signal or driving on the wrong side of the road. The cop does not offer *satyagrah* to the defaulter, all he does is pull out his receipt book and collects the fine and leaves the violator poorer but wiser for another day. Similarly, animal slaughter, regrettable as it is for *any* reason and at *any* time or place, is not allowed in any place other than an authorised slaughterhouse. Butchering animals in front of temples or in residential neighborhoods violates not only the law but also the public's sense of niceties.

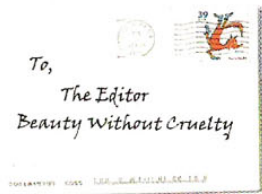
'Voluntary' social reform measures even in villages are often implemented under self-imposed threat of a fine. When a *panchayat* decides to get some social evil like illicit liquor or insanitation rooted out 'voluntarily', the voluntariness is always provided teeth by the panchayat's imposition of a fine for violators. Urban laws are the same.

The sacrifice was unfortunately not averted, it was only moved away from the precincts of the temple. But that was still half a victory since, as we wrote in our article on sacrifice in Spring 1998, it succeeded in removing the sanctity that would have gotten attached to the act if it had been performed in a place of worship. The methods of a civil society are sufficient for that limited objective. What they are not sufficient for is to achieve the more difficult task of persuading the 'worshippers' to desist from killing the animal *anywhere*. In other words, to abstain from eating meat entirely (at least on that auspicious day?), no matter what the source or who the killer. There, now, is where Gandhiji's methods (*Gandhigiri* to our Munnabhai fans) finds no substitute. We have ambitious plans for that in our forthcoming year, and hope you will take part in our solutions to eradicating the practice from Indian soil. Do see the notice on the inner back cover to participate.

*R.R. Konkar*

Ranjit Konkar, Ph.D.  
Editor





Dear Editor,

I am a student of IIT Kanpur. I visited Guwahati in December 2005 for a conference at IITG and also happened to visit Kamakhya Devi Temple. It is horrifying to see animal sacrifices taking place there. My family and friends together all are willing to contribute to stopping of this kind of brutality towards animals. Hindu religion initially used to offer animal sacrifices but that was stopped and from animal it descended to cocunut offerings. Kamakhya happens to be the ONLY Hindu temple in India which offers animal sacrifices. I am willing to get people to protest against the sacrifices at Kamakhya Devi temple.

- Riddhi Jaydeo Chokhawala

**Editor** - Riddhi, you are drafted! We are beginning a research-cum-reform project on sacrifice for which we need volunteers fired with passion like this. Please read the ad on the inner back cover.



Dear Editor,

I am a resident of Pune and I want to know more about the Maharashtrian festival of 'Bail Pola'. As per my knowledge the cattle are worshipped on this day and are not used in the farms for work...but recently I came across a video clip where these animals were tortured and were beaten like anything to win a race...and this is not too far from Pune city... I wish that an organisation like this one will do the needful. Thank you.

- Ms. Gadgil

**Editor** - It is true that cattle are pampered on

this day, the last day of Shravan month. There are certain villages which have even organised animal camps for the treatment and well-being of oxen on this day. Though we are yet to hear of races being held on the day itself, we confirm your report that oxen are beaten and tortured with physical force during races in other festivals in the state.

Indian culture on the one hand shows respect for cattle on days like Bail Pola while on the other hand inflicts severe cruelty on these very same creatures for mere entertainment. This harsh contrast has been the driving power behind our cracking down on bullock cart races since many months. You can refer to our website wherein bullock cart racing features as a campaign (homepage) as well as in the online version of our magazine *Compassionate Friend*.



Dear Editor,

I am an employee of TMB. Today one of the stray dogs bit a 'Manager'.

Hence the dog was beaten mercilessly till he vomited some of his parts. This shows that we blame Taliban for their cruelty but we ourselves are worse than Taliban. Nobody considered that the dog might have ben harassed before he bit someone. Killing was not an answer.

- Veer

**Editor** - Getting bitten surely sounds like a justifiable reason for getting angry, especially considering the chances of getting rabies, since strays are rarely immunized. But we agree that killing is not the answer. Dogs rarely bite without provocation.







# A Tribute to Akbarali Jetha

By Diana Ratnagar

Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 was Beauty Without Cruelty – India's 32<sup>nd</sup> birthday. We never imagined that on this very day our President, Akbarali H Jetha would pass away. BWC lost its President of 27 long years standing, but the world lost a great thinker, author and vegan.

Born and brought up as a non-vegetarian, Akbar decided to become vegetarian and progressed to being a vegan purely on compassionate grounds, a rare phenomenon in the Khoja community. His wife, Suraiya and their three children readily followed suit. Touchingly, she feels he was their teacher and if it weren't for him they would never have given up eating meat or using leather and animal derived products.

In and out of hospital, Akbar suffered physically but never stopped thinking philosophically. I remember visiting him at Breach Candy some years ago and was amazed at his outlook although he was at the time battling to live. Through his enlightened books he shared with others his ideas and values. Similarly he shared his wealth by giving frequent generous donations.

Among the books written by Akbarali H Jetha the combined edition of Reflections has indeed inspired readers. Below are some significant quotations:

*"There can never be peace and happiness in the world so long as we exploit other living creatures for food or otherwise."*

*"Other creatures kill mainly for survival, whereas we kill mainly for self-gratification."*

*"Strange, that man should attribute cannibalism only to those who eat the flesh of their own kind."*

*"Many creatures must die, for one non-vegetarian to live."*

*"It is crafty of man, to call a person a non-vegetarian instead of a carnivore."*

*"We have built slaughter houses for animals and hospitals for ourselves."*

*"A change in our diet could change our destiny."*

*"Our diet should be based on harmlessness."*

*"The diet can reveal much of a man's personality."*

*"Disease is due to lack of awareness whereas ageing is due to our faulty diet."*

*"It is impossible to do without medicine, so long as we consume cooked food."*

*"Is it cooked food or dead food?"*

*"Many people are vegetarian by birth, but few – by conviction."*

*"Those who belittle, mistreat or harm other living creatures have not realized the consequences to themselves."*





# The Agarwals

VEGETARIAN COMMUNITIES

This quarter, **BWC** would like to dedicate its Vegetarian Communities column to that conscientious group of vegetarian practitioners, the Agarwals of India.

## A community is born...

The Agarwal community was born in the womb of valour, nurtured in the cradle of Indian mythology and matured to evolve a strong conscience. It is said of King Agrasen,

the founder of the Agarwal community, that he was a valiant yet compassionate king who treated all his subjects equally and without discrimination. Such was his attitude towards his people that they willingly and gladly submitted themselves to his rule and

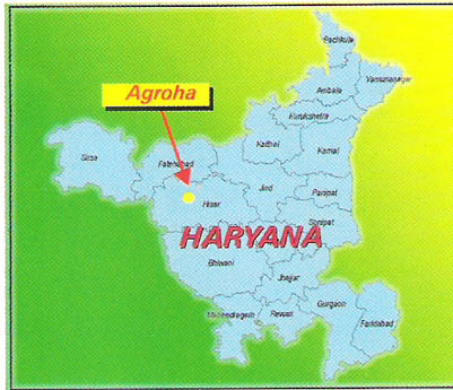
marched him into victory at many battles. But as destiny would have it, there came a turning point when one day the valiant king found himself on a different kind of battle field; one where his conscience waged war against the ruler in him. He came face to face with the fact that the battles he fought came with a price...the lives of his warriors and a lifetime of suffering for their orphans and widows. This realisation moved King Agrasen to tears and drove him to the Gods for an answer. Mythology steps in at this point and states that his heart-felt prayer reached the Goddess of wealth, Mahalakshmi, who appeared to him in a vision and suggested that he give up his life-taking Kshatriya

tradition for the peaceful tradition of trading. The advice came with a promise from the Goddess that he as well as his descendants would be blessed with her eternal presence if he were to establish a new Kingdom.

The king wasted no time in acting upon his divine benefactor's advice. In 3200 B.C the emporor and his wife, queen Madhavi, established a new kingdom by the name of Agroha. This new kingdom existed near the modern-day city of

Hissar in Haryana. The kingdom of Agroha, built on the honest soul-searching efforts of a benevolent king and the widely believed divine intervention, soon became prosperous.

Agrasen went on to establish 18 clans (or *Gotras*) for each of his 18 sons based on the names of their Guru. Trade, agriculture and industry continued to flourish. During the centuries that followed, as the Agroha Empire's prosperity caught the fancy of many foreign conquerors, its wealth was plundered and its original inhabitants were forced to migrate to other parts of India. Over time, the descendants of King Agrasen came to be called as the Agarwals.





## What's in a name?

The various spellings in use for the name are not significant to the origins of the clan, only to their individual preferences, that's all. Till today, the Agarwals have the very same 18 *gotras* that were given to them and they proudly carry on the fame and name of Agrasen. The names associated with the original *gotras*/clans (and variations thereof) are the surnames of the Agarwal community today: Mittal, Bansal, Singhal, Jindal, Kansal, Airan, Tingal, Bindal, Garg, Goyal, Goyan, Mangal, Dharan, Madhukul, Tayal, Bhandal, Kucchal and Naagil.

All eighteen of these names are synonymous with the Agarwal clan.

## The dawn of India's animal-reverent culture

King Agrasen was a great influence in shaping India's animal-reverent culture. At various crossroads in his life, the king made compassionate decisions to save animals and laid foundations for their future protection. It was he who cast the cow in the sacred role of a *Mata* in order to protect its wellbeing, a sentiment which is held in high regard by the Agarwals even today. Various *gaushalas* have been established by the community to protect and nurture cows. It is also said that in his days, King Agrasen had imposed fines and successfully curbed deer hunting. Not only that, the king's benevolence is also known to have extended to snakes since he was married into the *Naag Vansh* (snake family). For this reason, Agarwals are known to worship and greatly respect snakes. In fact, killing a snake is looked upon as a sin.

Another reform King Agrasen is known to have fathered is the end of animal sacrifice.

As history quotes, another very crucial battle that King Agrasen fought and won was waged in the area of religious rights and ceremonies. It was during a *yagnya* when King Agrasen was plagued with conflicting thoughts on the widespread practice of animal sacrifice in the name of religion. He wondered whether it was fitting for the unholy act of killing animals to be performed during a holy *yagnya*. His thought found confirmation in his realisation that if Man could not give birth, or life to an animal, he had no right to snatch it away either. Immediately, the priests were ordered to perform the *yagnya* without sacrificing animals. It was a decision that was etched in the King's mind and soon on the pages of law. Not only did the king refuse to give in to pressure from the priest class, but he also went on to send out an order against sacrificing animals in his entire province, condemning the act as a sinful one.

## The dietary choice

The community is proudly vegetarian; another conscious choice which reflects their stand against killing innocent animals for the pleasures of our palate. The sentiments expressed by King Agrasen during the *yagnya* have so profoundly impacted the community that it promises to unwaveringly continue to abstain from non-vegetarian food for as long as the name of the community survives. The Agarwals have chosen a diet that avoids all animal-derived foods except milk. In the case of Jain Agarwals, a magnified sense of compassion limits their culinary choices only to fruits and vegetables grown above the soil in addition to milk and milk products.

- contd.



## The present day Agarwal

If one comes across an Agarwal today, one would find that the person would very likely be following King Agrasen's example by being involved in social service. The community has not forgotten Goddess Mahalaxmi's advice either, and practices the profession of trading till date. Some of the richest Indians, like Lakshmi Mittal, Subhash Chandra (Zee TV), Mittals of Bharti Telecom, Naresh Goyal (Jet Airways), Sajjan Jindal (Jindal Iron & Steel Company Ltd) are Agarwal. They are known to be strict vegetarians.

The Agarwals strongly identify with Indian culture and Hindi language. The community is broadly categorised under Vaishnavas and Jains. In the course of time, many Agarwals embraced Jainism which explains why a sizeable number of Agarwals today are Jains. Marriages between Vaishnava Agarwals and Jain Agarwals are very common.

Not so long ago, in 1998, it was an Agarwal who played a crucial role in BWC's successful campaign against animal sacrifice in Udbur. Readers

who wish to know the full story are referred to our Spring 98 issue of this magazine. The relevant part is that because the Superintendent of Police, Mysore district (Rural), was one Sunil Agarwal, our plea to him to take preventive action against the sacrifice got such a positive hearing. Had it been a person of a community not traditionally sympathetic to the cause of vegetarianism, it would have been a very uphill battle for BWC.

The Agarwal journey has been a lengthy one, where soul-searching and ethical choices have acted as the guiding light. Beginning with King Agrasen, the community has dedicated itself to a peace-loving lifestyle and to serving society. Here is a group of puritans whose leader motivated them to not only swap professions as they did in the past, but also to uncompromisingly embrace a vegetarian diet. But their puritan choices have by no means limited their reach and standing in the world of business, where they continue to scale the heights of power and success. The Agarwals have shown that walking on the straight and narrow is possible even in today's cut-throat world.



### CAMPAIGNS, INVESTIGATIONS AND REPORTS



Schools covered (with number of students) after the report of the last issue of Compassionate Friend, in chronological order:

- (1) Byramji Jijeebhoy Parsi School, 200
- (2) Shakuntala K. I. Jain Girls High School, 260
- (3) Bharda New high School, 500
- (4) Somaiya Medical College, 50
- (5) J J School of Applied Art, 100
- (6) Sophia Polytechnic, 25
- (7) Shakuntala K. I. Jain Girls High School, 200
- (8) G. D. Somani Institute of Fashion Technology, 60
- (9) S L Raheja School of Art, 100
- (10) Little Flower of Jesus High School, 350
- (11) SL & SS Girls High School, 1050
- (12) Gamadia Parsi Girls High School, 500
- (13) Anuyog Vidyalaya, 400
- (14) Chhatrapati Shivaji Vidyalaya, 150
- (15) Yusuf Meherally Vidyalaya, 200
- (16) St. Joseph High School, 350
- (17) B. K. M High School, 100
- (18) The Alexandra Girls Institution, 550
- (19) L. S Raheja College, 100
- (20) Sitaram Poddar Balika Vidyalaya, 200
- (21) B. J. P. C. Institution, 100
- (22) M. K. Sanghavi College of Com. & Economics, 50
- (23) Girton High School, 300
- (24) Learners' Academy, 110
- (25) St. Columba High School, 700
- (26) Teachers' Environment Education Meet, 75
- (27) Wilson High School, 350
- (28) Cumballa Hill School, 120
- (29) Laxman Prasad Poddar Kanyashala, 300
- (30) C. B. M High School, 430
- (31) Hume High School, 220.



We are delighted to announce that as many as 12 of these have given us their concrete commitment to the cause by joining our LifeReverent Program. These schools are given below, along with the commitments they have made:

Shakuntala K. I. Jain Girls High School - ★◆■; Bharda High School - ★◆●■; Little Flower of Jesus High School - ◆●■; Anuyog Vidhyalaya ★◆●; SL & SS Girls High School - ★◆●■; Anuyog Vidyalaya - ★◆●; Yusuf Meherally Vidyalaya - ◆●; St. Joseph High School - ★; B. K. M High School - ◆●; Sitaram Poddar Balika Vidhyalaya - ★◆●■; Laxman Prasad Poddar Kanyashala - ★◆■; C. B. M High School - ★◆●.

**KEY** (★- agreed to use only non-animal hair brushes ◆- agreed to never offer non-vegetarian food in their canteens ●- agreed to make non-leather shoes and belts compulsory ■- agreed to provide only plastic shuttlecocks and cork balls (for cricket))

We congratulate these schools for their decisions, which were taken entirely voluntarily. It is very rewarding for us to know that the commitments were made in response to watching our program. That is the role we wish to play, of bringing about a difference through pro-active steps arising out of awareness-raising. BWC is proud of these schools and grateful to them for joining the cause. And what to say of the reward of the audience's response, especially the innocent children's? Here are some of the more moving moments we have experienced during the programs:



**St. Columba:** The teacher made all students rise, and after requesting us to bring on the slide of the pledge, made them put their hands to their chest and repeat the pledge after her. This was a first-ever!  
**Shakuntala High School:** One of the students, Divya Gohil, rose in tears from the audience and came up to the microphone to share her grief at seeing the treatment of animals by humans, sobbing all the while. We applaud Divya for fearlessly and unashamedly sharing her emotions with the rest of the audience, which was fighting shy to share their feelings. Congratulations, Divya, you will become a great person some day.  
**Alexandra High School:** On the day of India's Independence, 15 August, we were invited at Alexandra High School. The entire audience, consisting of 142 children became student members of **BWC!** Another first.  
**Anuyog High School:** The Principal, Shri Satish Chindharkar, rose to come to the microphone at the end of the program and before anybody else, made a public pledge to turn vegetarian that day.  
**SL&SS:** The entire teaching staff became **BWC** members!  
**Little Flower HS:** The Principal, Ms. Sister Sodder, offered **BWC** free use of the school hall for our organizational purposes! In a part of the city where a square foot costs Rs. 10,000, this was a princely offer indeed.

In addition to the regular 1-hr presentations, special workshops, on the issue of Snakes, were held at the following 6 schools:  
 1. Byramji Jijeebhoy Parsi School (Charni Road, 10-May-06),  
 2. Shakuntala K. I. Jain Girls High School (Marine Lines, 14-Jul-06),  
 3. Little Flower of Jesus High School (Marine Lines, 17-Jul-06),  
 4. Gamadia Parsi Girls High school (Marine Lines, 25-Jul-06), 5. SL & SS Girls High School (Thakurdwar, 25-Jul-06), 6. Anuyog Vidyalaya (Khar-E, (28-July-06). The topic was selected because of the festival of Naag Panchami which was around the corner then. The programs, conducted by Shri Sunil Kadam, a snake expert in Mumbai, were a great success as much because of Kadam's lively talks as because of the live snakes that he brought to the programs and gave students the opportunity to handle. The squeals from the girl students were our pleasure! Kadam uses only snakes which he has personally rescued from snake charmers or those which he gets called upon to remove from residences. We hope to repeat his programs next year also.



Students of Shakuntala School playing BWC's live 'Snakes and Ladders' game





THIS YEAR ON W  
**BWC** SAID IT WITH A HUN  
 THE POSTERS WERE THE CREATIO  
 CITY'S LEADING



B D Somani Institute of Art and Fashion Technology, J J Institute of Applied Art, L S Raheja College of Art, and Sophia Polytechnic-Arts and Design Department participated in the 'Root for Vegetarianism' poster-designing competition. The competition drew in some very creative entries which in turn inspired an exhibition on the occasion of World Vegetarian Day (1<sup>st</sup> October 2006). The event was conducted at Gamadia Parsi Girls High School on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> October. 3 winning entries (as seen alongside) were awarded trophies, and certificates were handed out to the Top 10 entries (See next page).

The design of the trophies was also

**1st Prize - Ankita Ghude**  
 Intermediate Appl. Art -  
 Sophia Polytechnic



They have the power to change a game !



Do you have it in you ?  
**BE VEGETARIAN**

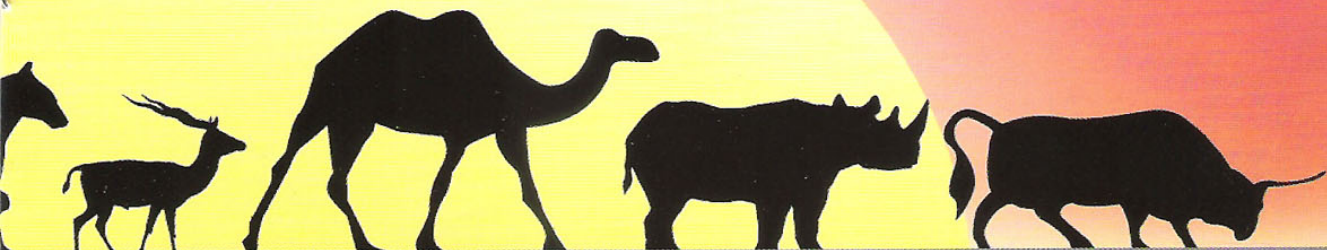
AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CHARITABLE TRUST FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS



Issued in the Interest of the Public



WORLD VEGETARIAN DAY,  
HUNDRED AND FIFTY POSTERS.  
DESIGNED BY HUNDREDS OF YOUNG STUDENTS FROM THE  
ART COLLEGES.



BWC's. The animals featured against the rising sun are all Nature's vegetarian heavyweights (some like the Hippo and the Gorilla are not included for the lack of suitable silhouette) to suit the topic of the contest. Indeed the initial topic of the contest was "Vegetarian Animals" but it was later broadened to the general topic of vegetarianism.

Take your time and browse through our gallery of posters. We suggest you share these with some of your non-vegetarian friends and family members. We believe the messages in the posters will strike the right chord and help steer many towards conscientious lifestyle decisions.

**2nd Prize - Rushina Kapashi**  
3rd Yr - BD Somani Inst. of Arts  
& Fashion Technology

**3rd Prize - Pankaj Juvekar**  
Final Yr. BFA - JJ Inst. of  
Applied Art



“बहुत ज्यादा भेंडी खानेपर  
कोलेस्ट्रॉल बढ़ता है  
कभी सुना है क्या?”

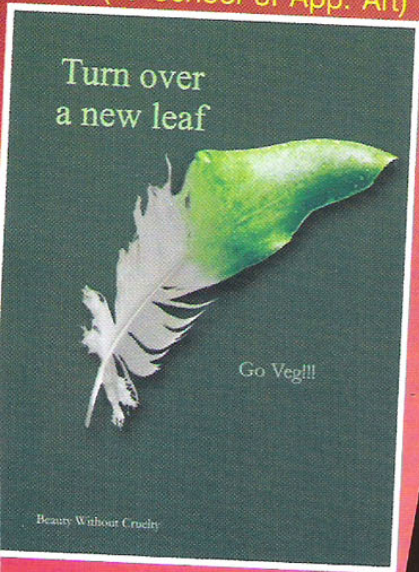
असह्य है हिंसक  
दिल का मुँह खोल  
नाम खोलो है।  
www.bwcindia.org

BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY  
www.bwcindia.org

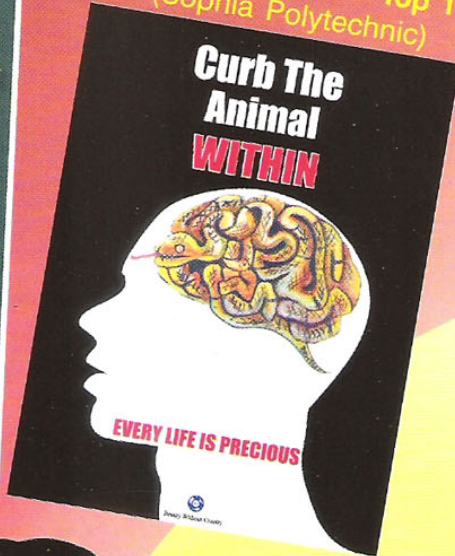
Readers, please note that the inverted commas in the poster are 'bhendi's! ©



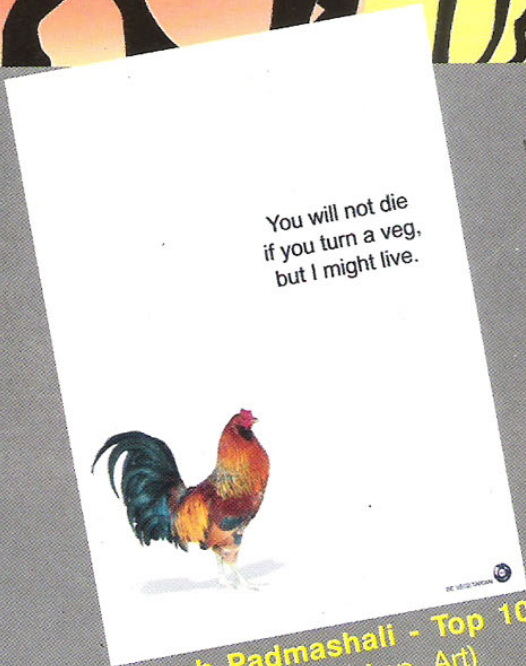
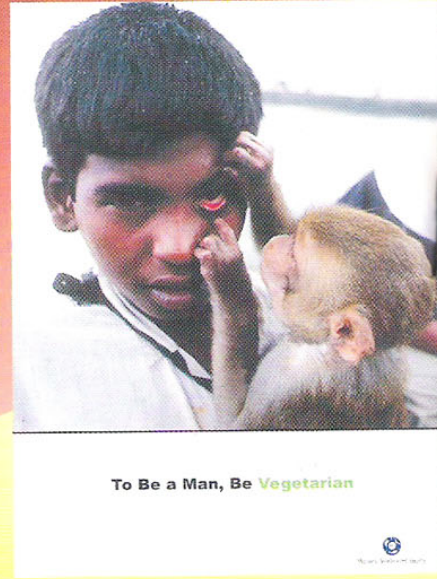
Mitali Rajadhyaksh - Top 10  
(JJ School of App. Art)



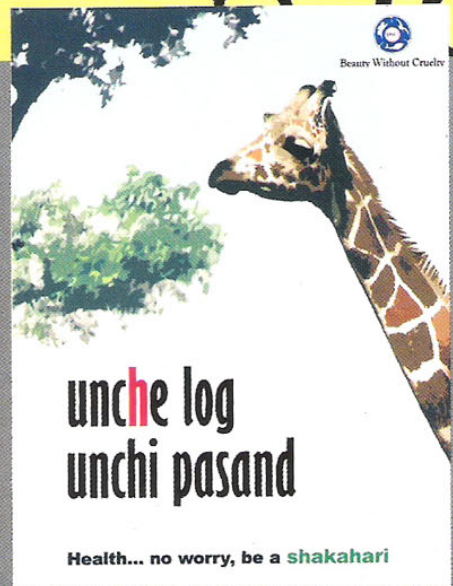
Deepti Vechlekar - Top 10  
(Sophia Polytechnic)



Prashant Patankar - Top 10  
(LS Raheja College)



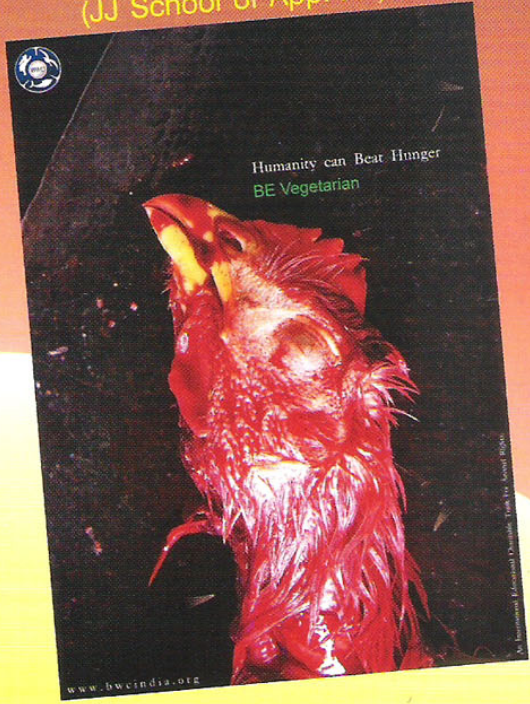
Lokesh Padmashali - Top 10  
(JJ School of App. Art)



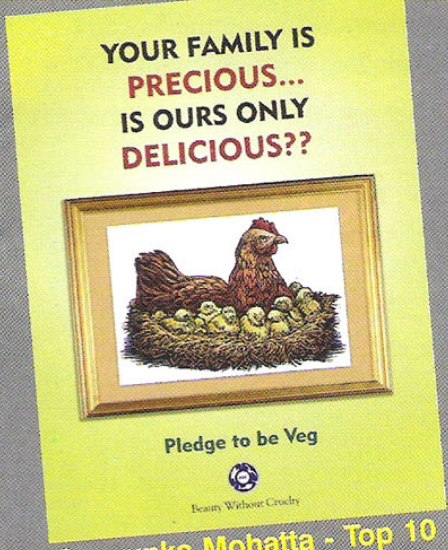
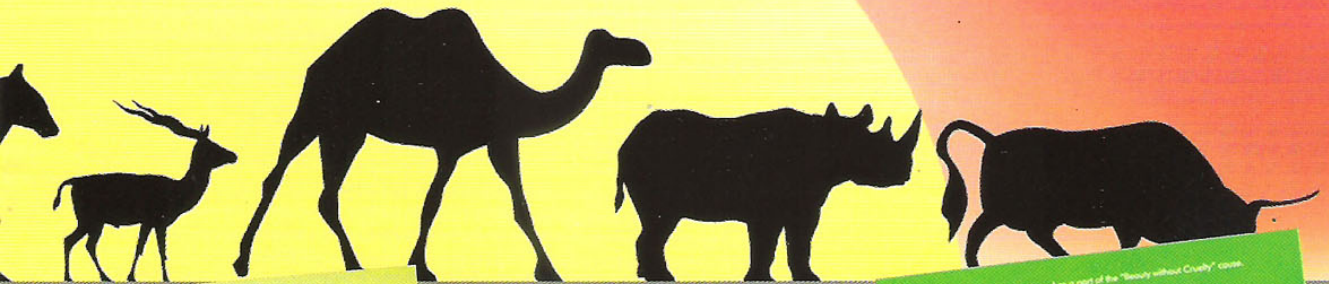
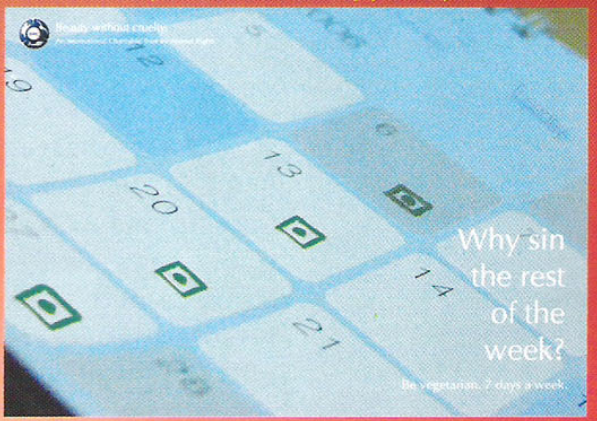
Monica Chedda - Best by Audience  
(Sophia Polytechnic)



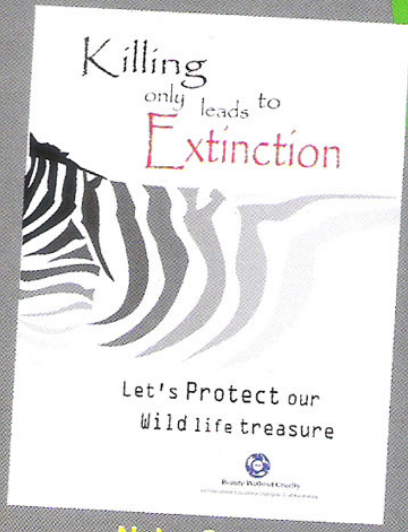
**Bhavik Panchal - Top 10**  
(JJ School of App. Art)



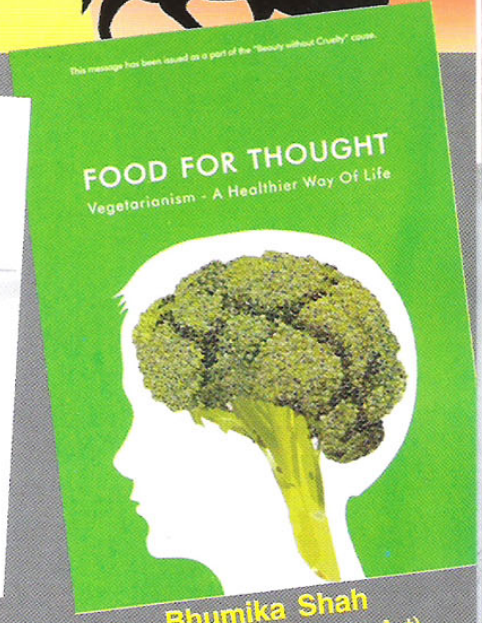
**Sweta Mehta - Top 10**  
(JJ School of App. Art)



**Sanyunka Mohatta - Top 10**  
(Sophia Polytechnic)



**Neha Saini**  
(Sophia Polytechnic)



**Bhumika Shah**  
(JJ School of App. Art)



# Animal Sacrifice

"To my mind, the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body."

- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Dussehra has unfortunately become a likely time for us at BWC to receive news and tip-offs of

animal sacrifice happening at some temples or another. Unfortunately because a historical (or mythological - who knows?) happening of such virtue as the vanquishing of evil (Raavan) by the good (Ram) is chosen to be celebrated by an evil instead of a good practice - animal sacrifice.

To the shock of our lives, this year the tip-off related to sacrifice incidents expected to happen near temples right inside metropolitan Mumbai, specifically, in the suburb of Andheri (West) (Fig.2). Since this was only a cab-drive away, we folded back our sleeves and prepared to take the matter by the horns.

The temples were two: one the Gaodevi Mandir on Amboli Hill (Fig 1) and the other a similar Gaodevi temple on Gilbert Hill (Gaodevi is a Marathi term connoting a 'village temple', harking back to the time when Mumbai was a congregation of small villages each with a temple of its own). A visit was made to both temples to acquaint ourselves with the location and layout of each. Both turned out to be in quite isolated and sheltered locations, removed from the hustle-bustle of Mumbai traffic. The map in Figure 2 shows the locations.

In both temples, we received open confirmation of the practice. At the Amboli Hill temple we were very matter-of-factly told that "20-30 bokad's are 'cut' and cooked." The festivities typically begin at midnight and the sacrifice was told to us to happen around 3-4 am, in the darkness of the night. The animals sacrificed are typically fowl, goats, and sheep. The flesh of these animals is then prepared as a feast for the entire community on the day of Dussehra.

The news from the Gilbert Hill temple was that not more than one or two sacrifices were typically performed, that too in the daylight of Dussehra every year. Surprisingly, however, the trustees of the temple seemed as keen as we were to curb the sacrifices

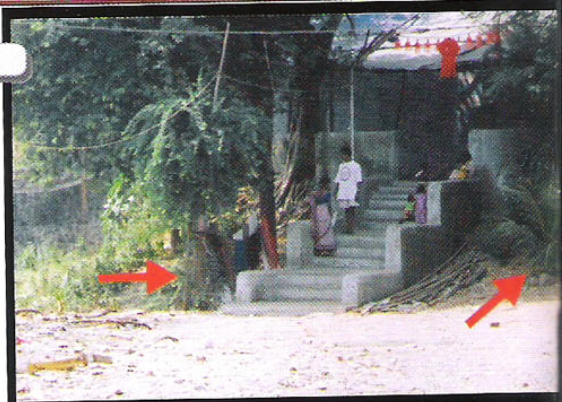
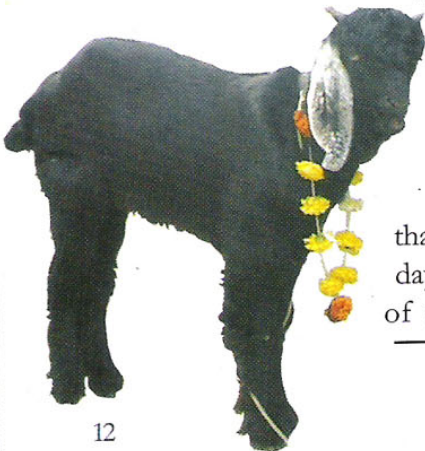


Fig 1: Arrows indicate where animals were tied



1 The term 'bokad' refers to a male goat.



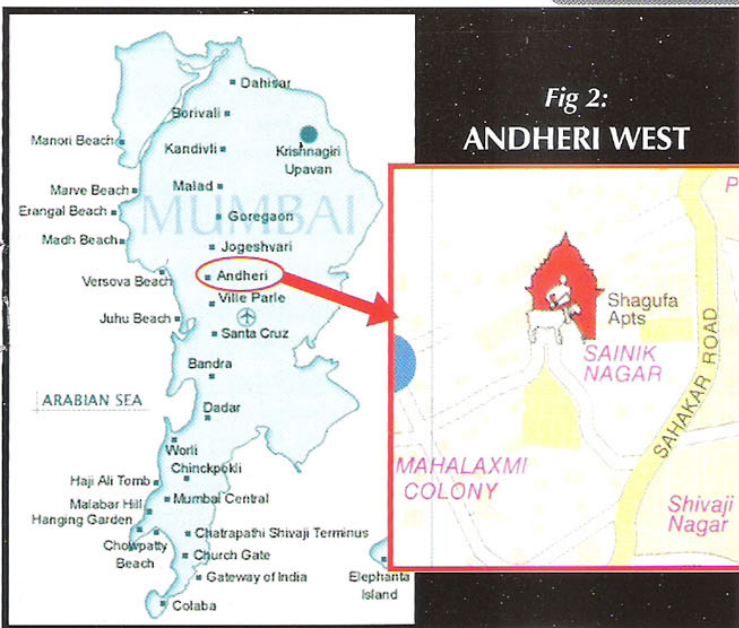


Fig 2:  
ANDHERI WEST

organisations. We are very grateful to Arvind Shah of Karuna, Kiran Indulkar of In Defence of Animals, Sunish of Plant and Animal Welfare Society, Aparna from Save our Strays, and Brinda Upadhyay from ASHA for taking time to be there with us at the police station. It made a lot of difference – strength does come from numbers.

Surprisingly, we received complete support from the police force at Oshiwara Police Station, under whose jurisdiction the Gamdevi temple at Amboli falls. The staff at the station was very co-operative and helpful towards us when we approached them

with our complaint and request. Senior Inspector D G Patil assured us that suitable and instant action would be taken to curb the incidents.

Thus, at the late hour of 11:30 pm on the eve of Dussehra when the rest of Mumbai was busy playing Dandia or sleeping, Sunita Kulkarni from BWC made a fact-finding trip to the temple, where she witnessed about 10 to 12 goats and sheep tied to trees outside the temple (Fig.1). A few cocks were running around within

that were being performed in the trust premises since years.

Since the law was on the side of saving the animals, we decided that it was imperative to approach the local police for help in curbing this illegal slaughter. Thus meeting the police as a delegation of organisations was the next step. The ‘delegation’ part is very important because it elicits more respect and a better response from the police than meeting them as lone individuals or even solitary



The complaints lodged with the police for the happenings anticipated were : i) the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Slaughterhouse) Act 2001, which make it mandatory for animals to be slaughtered only in registered slaughterhouses, not in the open; ii) the BMC Act, 1888 - Rules 402(2)/403/411, which allow only licensed butchers to slaughter animals and iii) the Indian Penal Code sections 428/429, which also makes killing animals punishable. Since the only authorised slaughterhouse in Mumbai happens to be at Deonar, it becomes apparent that animals can be slaughtered nowhere else other than in the Deonar slaughterhouse ...most definitely not in and around temples.



the temple premises, all of them unaware of the purpose of their being brought there. This confirmed Sunita's fears that animal sacrifice would be performed shortly at the temple.

As soon as Sunita reported what she had seen at the temple to BWC's Trustee Dr. Ranjit Konkar, he, together with Mr. Rajiv Sethi—a BWC life-member and a very trusted and reliable volunteer—went to the Oshiwara police to get help. At approximately 1 o'clock at night, the inspector on night shift, Chandrashekhar Gaikwad, along with a few other policemen left for Gamdevi Temple. Mr. Gaikwad reports being able, to his own surprise, to convince the people at the temple without difficulty not to engage in animal slaughter at the site. To show that his efforts had indeed borne fruit, Mr. Gaikwad took Mr. Konkar and Mr. Sethi to the site. The absence of animals—

live or dead—indicated the success of his efforts at convincing, at least temporarily.

Whether or not animals were sacrificed, we cannot say. It is our sad feeling that the animals were taken somewhere else and slaughtered. But we took heart in having saved the temple land from bloodshed and the sanctity of Hinduism from defilement in at least the Amboli Hill Gamdevi Temple this Dussehra.

This Dussehra happened to coincide with Gandhi Jayanti. The occurrence of our success – even if partial - on Gandhi Jayanti made it feel very sweet to us. Gandhiji is known to have regretted (see box) that even he could not bring the sacrifices at Kalighat, Kolkata, to a stop and that he prayed that someone more gifted than he would one day be born to carry out the task. It has been our honour to have contributed in a small way to the attainment of his dream.

EXCERPT FROM

*A month with Gokhale - II, Chapter XVIII,*

**THE SELECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI - VOL.1**

*Justice Mitter's house was in the same locality, and I therefore went to the temple on the same day that I visited him. On the way I saw a stream of sheep going to be sacrifice to Kali. Rows of beggars lined the lane leading to the temple. One of such men was found seated on a verandah. He stopped me and accosted me: 'Whither are you going, my boy?' I asked him: 'Do you regard this animal sacrifice as religion?' 'Who would regard killing as religion?' 'Then why don't you preach against it?' 'That is not my business. Our business is to worship God.' 'But could you not find some other place in which to worship God?' 'The people are like a flock of sheep, following where leaders lead them. It is no business of Sadbus.' We did not prolong the discussion but passed on to the temple. We were greeted by rivers of blood. I have never forgotten that sight.*

*That very evening I had an invitation to dinner at a party of Bengali friends. There I spoke to a friend about this cruel form of worship. He said: 'The sheep don't feel anything. The noise and drum-beating there deaden all sensation of pain.' I told him that if the sheep had speech, they would tell a different tale. I hold today the same opinion as I held then. To my mind, the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body, I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by men from the cruelty of man. **It is my constant prayer that there may be born on earth some great spirit, man or woman, fired with divine pity, who will deliver us from this heinous sin, save the lives of the innocent creatures, and purify the temple.***







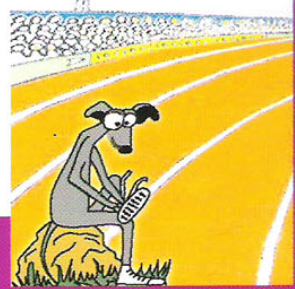
# ANIMAL NEWS

## Victory at Glastonbury!

Campaigners are celebrating the announcement that Glastonbury's Abbey Moor stadium (UK) will no longer host greyhound racing. The stadium controversially re-introduced racing in October 2005 following which a dog died after breaking his neck while racing. In another incident, a young dog was abandoned at the track whereas yet another dog was under threat of being killed by its trainer.

- <http://www.greyhoundaction.org.uk/glastonbury.htm>

Greyhounds  
'unlace'



Editor - Something we can relate to here in the context of bullock-cart racing.



(Fig. 1 - Liver expands to many times its normal size)

## Last taste of banned food

August 21<sup>st</sup> marked the last hours of Foie Gras, (French for 'fatty liver'), in Chicago. Foie Gras - the liver of ducks or geese is obtained by force-feeding grain to the birds through metal tubes until their livers expand to many times their normal size (Fig. 1). Much to the joy of animal activists, a similar bill has also been introduced in Philadelphia.

- *The Christian Science Monitor*. August 26-September 1, 2006.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0823/p02s02-ussc.html>

## Hawk among pigeons

This is Electra, a hawk who is flown in Trafalgar Square (UK) everyday to deter pigeons. Hawks are also flown at Houses of Parliament, the Arsenal Football Ground, and at schools and hospitals.

- *Maharashtra Herald*. August 18, 2006.



Editor - The pigeon problem is not ours alone! But the kite-flying problem at Sankranti certainly is.



## Sadistic Festivities on Gudi Padwa

People light crackers under a buffalo, oblivious to its agony, to provoke it into activity at the annual community festival held at Ganeshpeth on the occasion of Padwa.

- *The Indian Express*. October 25, 2006.





## What about a poacher as your guide?

At the Periyar tiger reserve (on the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border) ex-poachers lead tourists and adventure-seekers into the very forests where they once hunted animals for their fur, skin and body parts. 40 former poachers have been roped in by the State governments by offering them jobs as tourist guides and patrol personnel. They have turned out to be the best intelligence agents since they know the whereabouts of smugglers and how their rings work. They earn anything between Rs.2000 and 4000 as well as are freed from any pending court cases against them. The switch in profession also offers them with a better life for their children and financial security.

- *Economic Times. August 21, 2006.*



Editor - The choices that a country like us is doomed to accept-employing with honour the very people whose head it has earlier put a price on. Would we employ Veerappan as a tourist guide for an adventure ride through the sandalwood forests of the South? When the State treats poaching as a non-serious problem and funds lathis when machine-guns are required what else can you turn to than rewarding the once-guilty?

## Elephants show capacity for compassion.

Elephants pay their respects to lost loved ones and venerated leaders in a way that suggests a human-like capacity for compassion, scientists have said in the August issue of *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*. Researchers watched an elephant matriarch who fell ill and died in Kenya. They observed how unrelated matriarchs from another family first came to assist the ailing elephant. At one point, another elephant was seen lifting the collapsed animal to her feet by using her tusks. After her death, the deceased matriarch was visited by elephants from 4 other families as well.

- *The Indian Express - Pune. August 10, 2006.*

Editor - The Elephant is not alone in its visible expression of grief. Dairy cows that watch the limp dead bodies of their new-born male calves, done to death by man's greed for milk, are also seen to low inconsolably.



## The animal's dead but the cause is still alive.

Roopkali's tragic demise has brought into focus the animal abuse across Mumbai. Animal activists ask Mumbaikars to lend a hand. Confiscating animals is not an easy task. The city has only one animal hospital. Animal rights organisations have been fighting for land to rehabilitate animals but nothing has come out of it. Which is why it is now the responsibility of Mumbaikars to not encourage illegal practices that involve animals. In the case of elephants, they should only feed them and not give money to the mahouts. This only encourages mahouts to exploit the animals by making them beg.

- *DNA Mumbai. September 23, 2006.*

Editor - Be kind to the animal: Pay in kind (food), not in cash.







*"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 Jul 1989 - 8 Feb 2005)*

(MESSAGE SPONSORED BY THE RATHOD FAMILY)

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE AT BWC



### INVESTIGATION OFFICERS (2)

BWC has decided to undertake an extensive project on Animal Sacrifice with the goal of eradicating the practice from India. The various phases planned for the project are:

- ◆ extensive research in the form of first-hand data-collection from the various sites at which it is carried out in Maharashtra and some important sites outside
- ◆ documentation into reports
- ◆ publicisation of the findings through the print and electronic media, through direct public contact at exhibitions, talks, etc.
- ◆ production of a documentary on the topic
- ◆ workshop/seminar on the topic at a rural location to discuss strategies for carrying people with us
- ◆ pilot implementation of some such strategies at any one location
- ◆ formulation of an act for Maharashtra
- ◆ petitioning the Supreme Court to direct Government of India to ban the practice countrywide.

BWC needs 2 (two) persons in Mumbai to work as Investigation Officers on this project. The positions are initially limited to a duration of 4-6 months but could be extended based upon quality of performance. The geographic location of the main work would mainly be Maharashtra. The work would be almost entirely on field; office use would be limited to entry of data and documentation. Visits to each and every site would have to be made, documentary evidence and accounts collected, often at night. Frequent travel, especially within Maharashtra, is to be expected.

The person should have a knack for striking a positive conversation with villagers, tribals, etc. Would need to interact frequently with local authorities, police and administrative.

The person should be fluent in Marathi, and good at Hindi. Working knowledge of English and computers would be beneficial for typing in reports, etc. Remuneration on par with other domestic NGOs. Interested candidates please contact our Mumbai office at 2421 1511.





में बिल्लियों से नहीं कहता  
कि वे चूहे खाना छोड़ दें |  
बगुलों से भी नहीं कहता  
कि वे मछलियां खाना छोड़ दें |  
न ही गीदड़ों और भेड़ियों से  
ऐसा कुछ कहता हूं |  
भला पशुओं से क्या कहना?  
लेकिन आप तो मानव हैं न!  
मांस तो मानव का आहार नहीं है

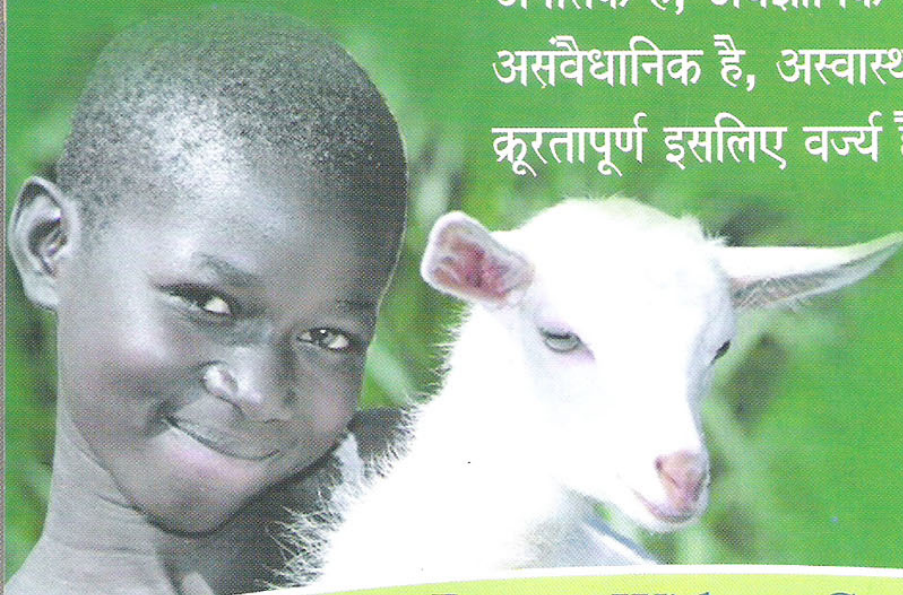
# आप तो मानव हैं

- दिलीप धींग  
शाकाहार क्रांति , मई २००४

मांसाहार -

अप्राकृतिक है, असात्त्विक है,  
अमानवीय है, असांस्कृतिक है,  
असामाजिक है, अधार्मिक है,  
अनैतिक है, अवैज्ञानिक है,  
असंवैधानिक है, अस्वास्थ्यकर है,  
क्रूरतापूर्ण इसलिए वर्ज्य है

अतः हे मनु-पुत्रों!  
इसे छोड़ो  
और अपने आपको  
मनुष्यता से जोड़ो।



**Beauty Without Cruelty - India**

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie. Pune 411 040. INDIA. Tel: 0(20) 2686 1166  
Telefax: 0(20) 2686 0016 Website: [www.bwcindia.org](http://www.bwcindia.org) e-mail: [admin@bwcindia.org](mailto:admin@bwcindia.org)

