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COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

Journal of Beauty Without Cruelty – India
An International Educational Charitable Trust for Animal Rights

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Let all dogs wag their
tails like I can!



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Front Cover: Cocker Spaniel Lucy Jeejeebhoy with her un-docked tail.

Photo: Kajal Harpude

Editor's Note:

Several members have said that, though they have e-mail IDs, they would prefer to receive printed copies of *Compassionate Friend*. In view of this, BWC will only send the e-version of the magazine to members who voluntarily opt for it. All others in India will all receive printed copies. Because of the high postage involved we request overseas members, however, to send us their e-mail addresses so that we may send them the e-version.



Beauty Without Cruelty
is a way of life which causes no creature
of land, sea or air
terror, torture or death

Compassionate Friend is published every Spring (February), Summer (May), Monsoon (August) and Winter (November).

Editorial

Dockers Should be Docked

It is now well known that companion animals like dogs and cats play the role of therapists by spontaneously giving us unconditional affection and loyalty. The faithful dog has been called “man’s best friend” down the corridors of time. Numerous instances have been documented when dogs and cats have saved people from danger and death. Legend even has it that *Chhatrapati* Shivaji’s dog, Waghya, jumped into his master’s funeral pyre!

Unfortunately, companion animals often become their owners’ status symbols or watchdogs. The owners buy the most popular, expensive breeds for security or ego-gratification, ignoring the pets’ need for reciprocal love, care and respect on par with members of their families. This does not mean we need to go overboard in what we do for them. They do not need what we consider luxuries, like beauty treatments or designer togs. In fact, they dislike these.

Wikipedia says, “In modern times, tail docking is done either for prophylactic, therapeutic or cosmetic purposes. For dogs who worked in fields, such as some hunting dogs and some herding dogs, tails could collect burrs and foxtails, causing pain and infection. Tails with long fur could collect feces and become a cleanliness problem, and particularly for



Porche Bosco with his un-docked tail

herding dogs, longer tails could be caught in gates behind livestock.”

Be that as it may, tail docking (amputation), cropping ears (cutting and stitching to make them stand up), de-barking (surgically reducing vocal chord tissues), removing of dewclaw (cutting off the extra toe high up on the inside of the forepaw, used to facilitate gripping), subjecting pups to confinement in pens to stunt their growth, and being tattooed painfully (linked to frivolous human vanity), are tortuous practices frequently inflicted upon puppies by self-styled “dog-lovers.”

In England, during the Georgian period, a tax was levied on non-working dogs and, as working dogs had their tails docked, this facilitated differentiation between the categories. To avoid paying this tax, people began docking non-working dogs’ tails as well, and thus commenced the cruel practice of tail docking for particular breeds. It is now claimed to be a traditional, normal procedure done to enhance the “look” of certain show dogs to meet breed registration standards.

The American Kennel Club mistakenly feels that tail docking and ear cropping are “acceptable



Pumpkin Bosco with her docked tail

practices integral to defining and preserving breed character and/or enhancing good health”, so breeds like Boxers are severely penalized at dog shows if without these amputations. Breeders ridiculously justify cropping Boxers’ and Doberman Pinschers’ ears, opining that it makes these guard dogs look more ferocious.

Tail docking or “bobbing” involves shortening the natural length of a dog’s tail. It is done either by cutting off the blood supply to the end part of the tail or by putting a rubber ligature on for several days, after which the dead end supposedly dries and drops off, or by cutting the tail off at the desired juncture. This needless and painful amputation is carried out without anesthesia almost immediately after a pup is born, or before it is a fortnight old. The puppy begins life in pain and the adverse after-effects frequently continue over its lifetime.

It is barbaric, unethical and unacceptable to carry out amputations on young, healthy puppies, discarding almost their entire tails for human vanity. Tails are dogs’ rudders, keeping them balanced when moving. Dogs also use their tails for communication – the commonly known happy greeting expressed by wagging,

as well as to convey anger, aggression, caution, and other feelings. These are good enough reasons for not chopping their tails off.

Ear-cropping is another alteration done to dogs under sedation when they are around 10 weeks old. It involves incisions beginning at the tops of the ears, finishing close to the head. The ears are then sutured and typically, an aluminum frame is taped over the pup’s head to keep its ears upright. The contraption has to remain on for as long as 21 days. Three weeks, beginning with oozing blood, acute pain and discomfort, are followed by another five weeks or so of continued pain (particularly for those pups whose ears flop even slightly) till the ears are permanently deformed to an illusory “perfection.”

Animal activists who consider docking tails and cropping ears nothing less than cruel amputation and mutilation of innocent puppies’ bodies have been successful in getting these practices banned in many countries. Sweden was the first to ban tail docking for cosmetic purposes in 1989. Other countries followed suit. In Europe, ear-cropping is illegal, though some countries have made exceptions allowing the docking of tails.

Beauty Without Cruelty hopes India will also ban these two, and other cruel practices, perpetrated upon dogs to change their natural beauty and structures.

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The Straw that Breaks the Camel's Back

By Khurshid Bhathena

Kartik Purnima is when the world's largest cattle fair takes place in Sonapur, near Patna. During this fortnight-long festival, a million heads of cattle are adorned and sold. Heavily decorated elephants, horses and camels are also traded. It is not unusual to find dogs, buffaloes, donkeys, ponies, monkeys, chimps, sheep, rabbits, bears, cats, guinea pigs, poultry, birds and fish at the Sonapur *Mela* as well.

India's second-largest cattle fair is at Nagaur, in Rajasthan. In addition to cows, bullocks and oxen, camels and horses are traded. Camel racing is included in the festivities, along with illegal cock-fights.

Camel safaris are organized across Rajasthan to attract tourists. Camel rides, races, dances, acrobatics and, sometimes, camel polo are part of all the Desert Festivals. At the famous Bikaner Camel Festival every January, a pageant is held in which decked-up camels are made to dance. Camels and horses have been recently introduced at Asia's biggest donkey fair, a 500-year-old traditional festival at Sanganer, near Jaipur, organized by the All-India Donkey Development *Mela* Committee. Donkeys are traded, and made to race, here.

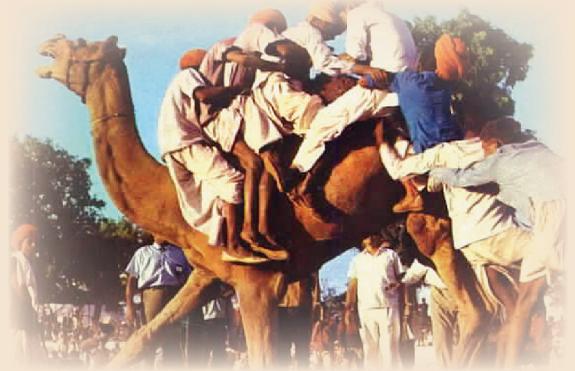
Races involving animals such as camels, donkeys, elephants and buffaloes are organised as novel attractions at fairs or other gala events, with no consideration for the animals. The worst of these may be the camel races at the

annual Pushkar Fair, near Ajmer, again in Rajasthan, where as many as a dozen persons sit atop a bedecked camel made to race other camels. Trading in, and competitions for, cattle and camels, camel beauty contests, selling of finery, saddles, whips and footwear are integral parts of this fair. The camels' noses are pierced for rings to be inserted, and their fur cut out in patterns. Ironically, the leather as well as bone jewellery sold are of camel origin.

Exploited to the Hilt

Camel hide, considered stronger than bovine leather, is commonly used in Rajasthan for slippers/*mojadis*. Entire pieces of furniture, bags, doors and artefacts like lampshades, vases and bowls are covered with camel leather, some embossed in gold and other colours. *Usta* artists who do this cordwain work (decorating leather for walls by embossing/painting) refuse to compromise by using artificial leather. Their works adorn the walls and ceilings of Hindu shrines and Muslim *dargahs*.

The National Research Centre on Camels (NRCC), initially under the aegis of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, started out with a mandate to develop infrastructural facilities for the conservation and preservation of camel breeds in arid and semi-arid regions, and to generate scientific and technical information. Situated



One for the Guinness Book of World Records?

on the outskirts of Bikaner at Jorbeer the NRCC has improved the traditional camel cart by installing electric indicators to avoid accidents after dusk.

Instead of pursuing its original mandate, the NRCC is now emphasizing the transformation of "the ship of the desert" into a milch animal. A modern camel dairy has been set up at its campus. The Rajasthan Milk Federation has begun collecting 1,000 litres of camel milk per day, and has launched tetrapack sales as far as New Delhi. In addition to milk products, camel-milk-based derma-cream has been developed, the use of camel bone in place of ivory has been encouraged as also trendy coloured, polished and embossed camel bone jewellery. Camel hair is being blended with wool. Camel herds have been subjected to the unnatural embryo transfer technique and selective breeding for the genetic improvement of indigenous breeds. The females have been made to super-ovulate with the aim of reproducing thrice, instead of twice, every two years.

At *Bakri Id* and *Ramzaan Id*, the unfortunate are not only *bakris* — camels and cattle are sometimes also killed for feasting on. In November 2005, some

BWC members in Kochi found that two camels had been brought there for feasting. On receiving complaints, the Kochi Corporation banned their slaughter.

Court Judgements

The owner of the camels approached the Kerala High Court, which judged that the camels could not be slaughtered, on the grounds that there was no provision for slaughtering camels within the corporation limits, and there was no qualified vet to certify their fitness for slaughter or the suitability of their meat for human consumption. Also, no one was licensed to slaughter or sell camel meat. Meanwhile, one of the camels had died due to poor living conditions and an inadequate diet.

In January 2009, the Karnataka High Court forbade camels to be brought into the state due to the climatic conditions being unsuitable for them. This could result in several deadly infectious diseases like anthrax, jeopardizing humans and other animals.

“Joy-rides”

All over the country camels, elephants and horses feature in festivals, religious functions and wedding processions. They are made to perform in circuses and occasionally “welcome” foreigners at particular venues.

Considered the models of endurance, camels have helped plough land as well as transport humans and goods. BWC has, to its horror, come across so-called animal rights people who, instead of working to end such exploitation, recommend the use of elephants, camels and monkeys for pulling loads in sugar and other factories.

Camels, ponies, and elephants are used for “joy-rides” too, particularly in hill stations and tourist resorts. The conditions under which these animals are kept are often pathetic. It is not uncommon for them to be loaded with the maximum number of adults and children they can physically carry. Naturally, some riders get thrown off. Both Indian and foreign tourists are responsible for patronising such “joy-rides.”

In 1996, Beauty Without Cruelty played a leading role in obtaining a High Court ruling to stop the entry of camels into Mumbai, and to rehabilitate the ones already in that city back to the Rajasthan desert, rendering the Juhu beach “joy-rides” history.



Don't just sit there — do something!

In states other than Rajasthan, a considerable number of camels are seen on the roads. They are made to give rides to kids and adults, and participate in processions. Some are made to walk long distances in crowded areas, carrying advertising banners on their sides. Camel rides are promoted at resorts such as *Choki Dhani*. Few people realise the cruelty involved. The animals are walked thousands of miles to this destination.

The people who exploit them consider the animals replaceable

commodities. A group of 6-10 camels usually settles down, illegally, next to a local market yard, so that free vegetable waste is accessible for their food. Camels are desert animals, unable to adjust to other climatic conditions, especially humidity. This leads to them falling ill frequently, and succumbing to diseases such as anthrax. Sick camels have been abandoned to die on highways, to avoid medical expense.

It is heartening that the Pune Police have recently banned camels, as well as horses and elephants, from taking part in processions on city roads. The restriction came about because of increasing human deaths and injuries due to the chaos created by traffic and exploding crackers.

However, Rajasthani camels were taken to different states like Jharkhand and used extensively as “campaign vehicles” for the 2009 elections. They were draped in banners and rented to move around the city for Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 per day. No concern was shown for the animals’ well-being.



*Khurshid Bhathena is
honorary secretary of
BWC*

FYI: Camel Hair

Not a single hair of a “Camel” paint brush is derived from a camel! “Camel” was the name of the man who owned the brand, which uses inexpensive hair types like those of goats, sheep, oxen (ear hair), horses, ponies, lower-grade squirrel hair, or blends of these. As for camel hair, it can be found mixed into woollen suitings manufactured by many well-known companies.

Fate Sealed for Another Monstrous Year

By Ashoke Dasgupta

researchers have indicated that about 42 per cent of the seals are skinned while alive and conscious.

The sound and fury of the seal hunt provides about 8,000 sealers an income of roughly \$16,500,000 a year. March-April is the “off” season for the fishing industry, so the seals are hunted by fishers who have no other income for a few months.

The Canadian government should look into whether the fishers can be retrained for better jobs. Many Aboriginals claim hunting, trapping and fishing are part of their centuries-old traditions. There was a time when hunting, trapping and fishing were the only career choices, but our ancestors moved on to better opportunities as they presented themselves. The world over, most atrocities against animals are committed by people who lack the courage, initiative, ability or wherewithal to manoeuvre themselves into better opportunities.

The subsidies given the sealing industry, and the research and development dollars diverted to a desperate search for the health benefits of seal oil, may constitute misused Canadian tax revenues. There are numerous other priorities in that country, including citizens’ health, education, housing, and an improved police force.



Photographs courtesy Sea Shepherd Conservation Society.

Canadian Senator Mac Harb introduced a Bill S-229 that would end the country’s commercial seal hunt. More than 40,000 people worldwide have already taken action to support him, says the International Fund for Animal Welfare. But no other senator had seconded the bill, which would save hundreds of thousands of baby seals from cruel slaughter each year. Harb has been contacted by about 40,000 individuals who support Bill S-229, says IFAW, but needed a seconder by April. He did not find one.

The U.S.A., Netherlands and Belgium have already banned Canadian seal products. The European Parliament, accounting for say 30 percent of the market, has proposed banning seal product imports. The ban requires the agreement of EU ministers to take effect, and the Canadian government hopes to challenge it at the World Trade Organization.

Russia’s Prime Minister Vladimir Putin called sealing “a bloody business that should have been banned long ago.” On 18 March 2009, Russia announced a ban on the killing of all harp seal pups under one year of age, ending its commercial seal hunt in the White Sea.

Most people maintain a studied indifference to the plight of animals in distress. Though Homer said, in “The Iliad,” that a cruel heart ill suits a manly mind, a psycho-social need for machismo — even among some women — seems to cause most people to present themselves as impervious to others’ pain or even their own, leave alone animals’ pain.



Ashoke Dasgupta is a journalist who has won three awards in Canada and Nepal, and the editor of *Compassionate Friend*.



The desperate, grisly, cold-blooded annual Canadian seal hunt started last March, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) having set the quota for this year at 280,000 harp seals.

Thousands of people in 47 cities around the world have protested against the great Canadian Seal Hunt. Some have participated in coordinated global protests in the last few years. Celebrities like Brigitte Bardot and Paul McCartney have joined protesters on the scarlet ice in recent years.

After the mismanaged east coast cod industry collapsed, the DFO declared war on seals, arguing that it would increase the cod population and generate employment (and votes) among fishermen. However, cod is not a staple food of harp or hood seals. The truth may be that the government hopes to profit from the subsidised seal slaughter, since Canada exports seal skins, seal oil and seal meat.

The clubbing or shooting to death of hundreds of thousands of seals, many only weeks old, is neither humane nor justifiable. That plenty of seals are left alive to breed pups for next year’s carnage does not justify the hunt as “sustainable,” other than suggesting that seals will not become extinct if the annual hunt continues. The issue is one of cruelty, not “sustainability.” Post-mortems conducted by international veterinary

Around the World

Trouble Brewing for Pigs and Cows

Environmental campaigners and pig farmers have called for the withdrawal of a genetic method for rearing pigs with more flesh on them. Breeders fear they may have to pay a U.S. biotech firm royalties if the patent goes through. The European Patent Office granted the patent last July, but will study the objections to it, because of demonstrations outside its Munich office. The existing patent will remain in force until and unless it is decided to revoke it. A panel of experts will evaluate about 20 objections. Monsanto applied for the patent four years ago,

before selling its pig-breeding technology to Newsham Genetics, another U.S. biotech firm. The patent is for a breeding process relying on a genetic marker to select pigs which yield juicier meat and fatten quickly. Marcus Soeder, Bavaria's environment minister, has urged a ban on genetic



Photo: Rohan (Bhate) Shah

patents on plants and animals. German Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner said Germany would ban Monsanto's genetically-modified maize, called MON 810. Soeder

and Aigner are members of the Christian Social Union party.

This may be in the cards for cows as well, since a female Hereford cow's genome has been sequenced, which may have a tremendous impact on livestock breeding. Research published in the journal *Science*, was the result of a six-year effort by more than 300 scientists in 25 countries. Humans, other primates, cattle and rodents have now had their genomes sequenced. If humans can ascertain which genes cause the differences between animals, opportunities may arise to enhance selective breeding. The best animals may be picked to produce livestock that make more meat, milk, or both, transforming how dairy and beef cattle are bred. It was unfortunate that humans found cows and pigs tasty.

No Monkey Business

David Martin (Labour), a Scottish Member of the European Parliament, urged a ban on primate testing to be extended so as to include monkeys in Scottish laboratories. He said testing on monkeys was immoral when other options could be developed. Monkeys are housed in some Scottish laboratories, in small family groups, until they reach maturity at 18 months. Then they are used for testing, which may involve fertility drug injections or the removal of blood samples. After that, they are put down. Apparently this research is useful in the

development of contraceptives and cures for cancers, miscarriages and infertility.



Photo: Neeraj Mishra

The European Union wants to ban lab tests on orang-utans, gorillas and chimpanzees, but not small monkeys. Ten per cent of European experiments on primates are conducted in

Scotland. Apparently experiments pertaining to women's health can be performed on primates because they are a menstruating species, unlike rats or sheep. Funded by the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research, animal testing alternatives are being developed in Scotland. Glasgow University does not perform tests on primates. If there is a total ban on primate testing in the EU, these experiments may be outsourced to India or Kenya. Those who respect animals should get ready in those countries, since large investments may be expected to motivate researchers there.

Fact, not Fancy

Eggs

By Nirmal Nishchit

Layers are hens raised in poultry units to produce eggs ad infinitum. The suffering inflicted upon them is far worse than that upon broiler chickens bred to be killed for their flesh.

Indian vegetarian culture considers eggs unacceptable. The Government of India has consequently made it mandatory for all packaged foods “which contain whole or part of any animal including birds, fresh water or marine animals or eggs as an ingredient” to display the non-vegetarian symbol.

As the National Egg Coordination Committee’s (NECC) propaganda has caused confusion, BWC presents facts which should make egg-eaters realise that they are supporting cruelty to hens for trivial purposes like baking cakes, or the harmful habit of eating eggs regularly. Every egg consumed increases the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

The strongest reason to avoid egg consumption may be the shockingly cruel conditions in which hens are kept on poultry farms. Confined to barren wire cages, barely able to move let alone build nests, perch, dust-bathe, with lights on all night, layers remain awake to trick them into doubling their egg production. As well, their daily maize-corn rations contain

additives such as antibiotics, hormones and colouring matter for yellower yolks.

A fertile egg contains potential life that may hatch into a chicken. On cracking an egg into a frying pan, people have been known to see the unmistakable life-form of the developing chick inside.

Some argue that they eat only unfertilised eggs and, ironically, call them “vegetarian” eggs. All traditionally-farmed eggs contain live embryos. Unwanted fertile eggs from factory farms are often passed on for sale along with infertile ones. There is no way consumers can spot unfertilised eggs; it is impossible to do so by looking at them.

Crack the Habit — Not the Egg

Salmonella poisoning is a common occurrence in those who consume eggs which have been, as the egg industry says, “improperly handled.” The symptoms include abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and/or chills within 72 hours of consumption. When bird flu first struck in 2006, massive losses were incurred by the poultry sector due to the “culling” of thousands of chickens. People feared consuming eggs (and broiler chickens). Demand fell, making the NECC launch a national campaign reassuring consumers that properly-cooked eggs were safe. It organised over 750 egg *melas* and stepped up efforts to promote

year-round egg consumption via hyped claims of their nutritional qualities and benefits.

Financial Clout and Blood Money

The promotion of egg consumption via the national media is at its worst on World Egg Day, on the second Friday of every October. Leading newspapers give the occasion full-page coverage, highlighting the so-called nutritional benefits of eggs, and urging people to eat them. Alongside such articles or elsewhere in the same issues, alert readers may notice advertisements released by organisations representing large segments of the country’s poultry industry, like the NECC and All India Poultry Development & Services Private Ltd. The egg propaganda is obviously linked to the industry’s advertising clout.

This deadly industry would not have grown to the extent it has, had our government not categorized intensive poultry farming as an “agricultural activity.” Poultry research is consequently funded in government-run institutions and universities, and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) assists with export infrastructure development. Total government support for the poultry sector, courtesy the taxpayer, runs to over Rs. 100 million. BWC objected to the recent setting up of a National Meat and Poultry Processing Board. Banks offer liberal credit schemes for poultry farming. One CD circulated by the National

Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) recommended that layer hens “not be kept on the farm beyond 18 months of age as their egg production will go down considerably and their efficiency of feed conversion will reduce progressively as they grow older... pointer for higher egg production: unsuitable and uneconomic birds should be timely culled.” Read: the fowls’ lives are unimportant; selling eggs and making money is the bottom line; “culling” is a euphemism for killing.

Such recommendations are outrageous. Is it the Government of India’s job to suggest breeding lives with the aim of exploiting and taking them for commercial gain? BWC sees it as *hinsa* in the so-called land of *ahinsa*.

Grains Eaten by Poultry Instead of Humans

One of the least-acknowledged facts pertaining to a non-vegetarian diet is that it is the root cause of rendering grains and cereals unavailable to hungry humans. This is especially true



Photo: animalpicturesarchive.com

for intensive poultry farming. Grains edible by humans, such as maize and soy, are fed instead to chickens made to lay eggs or killed for meat. More than 80 per cent of the maize grown in India, and 50 per cent of India’s soy meal production, is fed to chickens annually.

Two kilograms of grain for eight eggs, and 2.5 kilograms of grain for 500 grams of chicken meat, are the feed-to-eat ratios for producing the same amounts of protein. This information should suffice for people to stop consuming chickens and eggs as a step towards ending malnutrition and starvation.

Eggs in Chocolate

Lecithin, obtained from eggs or soy beans, is used extensively in the food industry as an antioxidant and emulsifier, especially in chocolate. Some companies specify the lecithin source on the wrapper. If the source is not indicated, it is likely to be eggs.

Sometimes, retail outlets give away non-vegetarian items with purchases over a certain amount, under promotional schemes. For example, Reliance Fresh has gifted six free eggs from Delight (a store next door which sells only non-vegetarian items like chicken, mutton, fish and eggs) to those who have bought goods worth Rs 225.00 or more. Vegetarians should object to non-veg gifts, not accept them passively because they are free to pass them on to someone who may consume them.

Caviar and Fish Roe

Contrary to the popular notion, caviar and fish roe are never ever found floating in the seas. Fish are killed for these eggs, and their flesh also consumed.

Caviar is considered an international delicacy. It comprises millions of eggs taken from inside the body of a fish before they are laid. The fish is knocked out to accomplish this and, while it is still alive, its belly is split open to remove the eggs. It is obtained from sturgeon, caught mainly in the Caspian Sea. As the sturgeon is the largest species of freshwater fish, it cannot be farmed. Depending on the size of the sturgeon, Caviar is also known as Beluga, Osetra, Asipenser/Imperial Caviar, Malossol, Payusnaya and Sevruga. However, Red Caviar is from salmon.

An experiment found that caviar given to blind folded tasters passed off as mashed green peas that have seen better days.

In India, *Shad* fish roe is consumed fresh or salted. It is as much a part of the fish as its flesh. In some regions, it is called *Garabh* or *Gaboli*. It is obtained from different fish species such as *Hilsa* in Bengal and *Bhing* or *Pala* in Maharashtra.

Shadow of a Bull

By Norma Alvarez

On 24 March 2009, the Goa Legislative Assembly unanimously approved a private member's bill, "The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Goa Amendment) Bill 2009." The Bill seeks to legalize bull fights in the state of Goa. It has not received the Governor's assent at the time of writing.

Bull fights, popularly known as *dhirios* in Goa, were banned by a Bombay High Court judgement on 20 December 1996. An appeal filed by the Bull Owners' Association against the judgment was dismissed by the Supreme Court on 27 January 1997.

The High Court declared bullfights illegal, and in contravention of the PCA Act. It prohibited them from being organized in the State. PFA-Goa, the petitioner, had challenged bull fights as violating Section 11 (1) of the PCA Act, which states that if any person incites any animal to fight, or bait any other animal to provide entertainment or organizes, or keeps, uses or acts in the management of any place for animal fighting, or permits or offers any place to be so used, it will constitute a cognizable offence, punishable in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code.

In its judgement, the Court has described *dhirios* as follows:

"A fight between two bulls or buffaloes...organized in an open field... and witnessed by a crowd of spectators from whom the organizers collect fees. The animals are goaded or incited, not only by the owners or trainers who stand behind the bulls, but almost the entire crowd of spectators participate in inciting the animals to fight. In the process the animals get insane, suffer injuries...at times the bulls can get gored and have to be put to sleep... The injured animal can also end up inflicting injuries to the spectators."

The Court observed that "though these bullfights were initially organized for fun, they are now being associated with gambling and betting. It has become commercial business at the cost of cruelty to animals." It rejected as devoid of substance the contentions of the Bull Owners' Association that bull fights are "a traditional sport and sheer game of strength of bulls." In other words all aspects, including the plea that the bulls are well cared for by their owners, and that *dhirios* are also a means of livelihood for some, were examined and rejected by the High Court. The Court directed the State of Goa and the Inspector General of Police to take immediate steps to ban all types of animal fights including *dhirios*.

Two or three years ago, a few southern Goa politicians, at least one of whom owned fighter bulls, started staging bull fights again, clandestinely but defiantly, in one or two

villages. That there was political support for the *dhirios* is obvious from the fact that they were held in those villages where the politicians had earlier declared their support for such events. The police, under duress and political influence, turned a blind eye. Reports of their occurrence began to appear in the press.

PFA-Goa filed a contempt petition. The High Court disposed of the matter on 12 December 2008 after perusing affidavits from the Superintendent of Police disclosing additional measures proposed, including proper gear, weaponry and police reinforcements to deal with this disobedience of a court judgement.

Law enforcement got tougher. Offences began to be registered, not only against bull owners, but also against owners of fields and open grounds being used as venues. *Panchayats* made a census of fighter bulls, and people keeping them.

Realizing that a lucrative source of illegal money earned from betting and gambling would soon be a thing of the past, the votaries of this depraved, cruel and uncivilized activity decided to enlist the support of local politicians to legalize bull fights again. Spineless politicians responded swiftly, with a beady eye on the national elections.

The Goa Amendment Bill describes *dhirios* as a "bull butting game" and seeks to permit them in accordance with

guidelines to be issued by the Government of Goa.



Cartoon courtesy www.sangrea.net

But can a mere change of nomenclature change the nature of the activity? Bull fights are, and will always remain, animal fights, and therefore prohibited by the PCA Act, a central statute. Since the amendment bill runs contrary to it, it cannot prevail. The assent of the president of India will be required.

It is hoped that sense will prevail among the highest constitutional authorities in the land, and that the president of India and the governor of Goa will not approve this legislation, especially as both the High Court and Supreme Court have declared *dhirios* a perverse form of cruelty to animals, contrary to the law of the land.



Padmashree advocate
Norma Alvarez is
president of PFA-Goa,
and a Member of the
Animal Welfare Board
of India.

Bread and Circuses

“...the People have abdicated our duties; for the People who once upon a time handed out military command, high civil office, legions — everything, now restrains itself and anxiously hopes for just two things: bread and circuses...”
— *Juvenal, Satire X, referring to the Roman populist practice of providing wheat, circus games and other forms of entertainments to poor Romans to distract them from more pressing issues, and gain political power.*

In 1996, Beauty Without Cruelty joined local bodies in their efforts to stop *dhirios* in Goa. We sent appeals to organizations and individuals in India and abroad, requesting that they write to the prime minister not to legalize these gory bull fights. Over a decade later, before animal activists could do anything to stop a similar move, politicians began wooing voters with promises of making the clandestine, bloody bull fights legal. This is hardly a pressing issue during an international economic monsoon.

This is how it plays:

- The Konkani word for bull fight is *dhirio*.
- Bulls are specially reared and trained to fight each other, horns filed and sharpened like lance-tips.
- On the morning of a fight, pick-up vans each carrying a contestant bull given an exotic name, are driven through the village election-rally style, with banners fluttering and music blaring. This makes the angry bull angrier.
- Bulls' tempers are further raised before fights by making the animals kneel for as long as possible with the trainers' hands around the bulls' testicles. The final cruel squeeze is the last aggravation infuriating the bull into head-butting.
- Bull fights are held in village rice-fields. There is no arena, fence or barricade, maybe a few flimsy bamboos to protect VIP spectators. Most bulls run amok, injuring everyone and everything in their way as they run helter-skelter.
- Seasoned bulls attack their opponent's necks. Blood flows and, if the weakened bull does not scamper away trailing blood, it is usually belly-trampled by its opponent.
- Heavy bets are placed so, in the end, it may not be only bulls' blood shed.



Perils of Modernization: Fat and Sugar

By Prerna Gupta

There is a tribe of people in Tanzania called *Hadza*, who are the only remaining hunter-gatherers in Africa. Every year, men from this tribe risk their lives to gather honey from killer bees' nests hanging at the tops of 100-foot-tall trees. If the men are successful, they return to the village (after gorging themselves on raw honeycomb) as heroes.

Humans evolved from times when sugar and fat were scarce, and natural instinct was not required to tell us when to stop consuming them. In the rare instances that we had ample of either, it was in our interest to eat our fill.

Fast forward 12,000 years to that pillar of modernity, the United States of America, and you'll find what may be civilization's cruelest joke on mankind: it is cheaper and easier to find a meal in the U.S. that has too much fat and sugar, than it is to find one that has too little, or even just a healthy amount. Moreover, nutrient-rich calories cost more per unit, than empty ones. Couple that with the natural human desire to eat as much fat and sugar as possible, and you have a major problem

on your hands (and hips). For example, an American in Atlanta could choose from one of the following two meals for lunch: a Quarter Pounder Value Meal (meat burger) from McDonald's for about \$4.00 or a salad from the Whole Foods Market for about \$12.00. The former may contain three times more calories, fat and processed sugar than the latter.

The problem for most Americans is that they cannot (a) afford to pay \$12.00 for lunch every day, (b) work close enough to a Whole Foods to buy such a salad on their lunch breaks, and (c) be satisfied eating salad for a meal. And so the world's wealthiest, most powerful nation has a raging epidemic of a deadly disease: obesity.

Unfortunately, this epidemic is spreading out from the richest country in the world, and affords a glimpse of India's future. Obesity is following a predictable trend in India, in tandem with its economic growth — it already affects five per cent (50 million) of India's population and, because of the availability of processed foods and unavailability of wives who stay home to cook, is growing steadily. Indians have the added

misfortune of being genetically predisposed to life-threatening problems like heart disease and diabetes. As Nandan M. Nilekani, MD and CEO of Infosys Technologies points out in his new book "Imagining India," Indians will soon comprise 60 per cent of the world's heart-attack deaths. All signs point to a dismal future for India's health.

On the one hand, we have 456 million people living in poverty, malnourished and barely surviving — and on the other, we have the "shining" Indian blindly following the fat, trail-blazing, American. Indians should not copy all things American.

There are many things traditionally Indian that, I hope, will be preserved for centuries to come. One of the most important is our diet. The next time you sit down to a modern meal, remember this — fries from McDonalds, a slice from Pizza Hut and a cold coffee from Starbucks are the bane of an American's existence.

Indians should learn from others' mistakes before it is too late. I, for one, will continue to hone my roti-rolling techniques to perfection, and urge my children to do the same.



Prerna Gupta is CEO of Yaari.com

BWC's New Face

By Amruta Ubale

www.bwcindia.org

One of BWC's core activities is the spreading of awareness about animal rights issues. Animals are exploited and murdered to produce various products including edibles, cosmetics and clothes. Many are not aware of these cruelties. Some who are aware want to take up the cause, but need reliable information. To this end, BWC has revamped its website.

The website starts with a short slide show which projects the relationship between animal cruelties and assorted products. The home page offers several links to data about BWC and its activities, animal cruelty issues, and how to contribute.

BWC's Profile

Information related to BWC's organizational profile is under links such as "About Us" and "Achievements." These links

tell about our history, beliefs, activities and achievements.

BWC's Work

More on BWC's work is under links such as "BWC Events," "Vegetarian Shoppers' Guide," "Investment Guide" and "Compassionate Friend."

Cruelty to Animals

Information on various cruelty topics is under other links: "Learn About," "Animal News," "Animals and What They are Killed For," "Educational Materials" and "Compassionate Friend."

Stop Cruelty to Animals

Information on how one can stop cruelty to animals falls under links like "Legislation," "Play Your Part," "Petitions," "Recipes" (food, pet food, beauty), "Promotional

Items," "Vegetarian Shoppers' Guide" and "BWC Certified."

BWC's Virtual World

Today's generation interacts online, so we have added new features like a link to BWC communities on social networking sites such as Orkut and Facebook. You will also find a BWC forum where BWC website visitors may discuss matters and post queries. Users will have to log in with user names and passwords.

BWC's Virtual Host

To make the website more appealing and user-friendly, we have added a virtual host who will answer your queries via links such as FAQ, and render information-sharing more interesting through other links like "Animal News," "Learn About," and "Recipes."

Other interesting features:

- You can soon become a member of BWC by paying the membership fee online following simple instructions through the link, "Play Your Part."
- There is a "Vital Vote" link where you can cast your votes on various issues to have your opinions count.

- You can show your support for the cause by placing the animal rights ribbon on your profile display picture, which may appear on social networking sites such as Orkut and Facebook. This can be done by following the instructions under the link, "Show Your Support."

We hope BWC members will not only make the utmost use of the features and information put up on the website, but also play active parts in the interactive links mentioned.

Log on to the BWC website and tell your friends, relatives and colleagues about it to spread the word!



Amruta Ubale is a BWC education officer.

Readers Write

Garland of Goat Guts

I am writing to you after many a year because of my shocked dismay on reading the enclosed news item, "Priest wears garland of goat guts in TN" in the *Times of India* dated March 2 2009.

According to the article, the guts of a live cockerel and a live goat were wrenched out at Karaikeni Village, Madurai District. A priestess garlanded herself with these intestines and blessed devotees. All this occurred in the presence of Peraiyur tehsildar R. Paneerselvam and a police team.

Apparently this "battlefield festival" takes place every other year, in memory of a battle between two kings over the ownership of a bird five centuries ago.

Garlanded and smeared with sandalwood paste and vermilion, a young cock and a goat were brought to a village field in a ceremonial march. Small incisions were made in the cock's and goat's stomachs through which their guts were pulled out and snapped off by the priestess, said to be an "inheritor" — possibly a descendant — of the king killed in the battle. She then placed them around her neck while blessing the queued-up villagers.

Can BWC do anything to stop such bizarre rituals and individuals?



Behram Dastur
 BWC life member

On receiving this letter from Mr. Dastur, BWC life member Mr. K.S. Satagopan wrote to the following three officers in Tamil. BWC also wrote to them, in English. Neither Mr. Satagopan nor BWC has received a response yet. We suggest readers also write these officers to protest this barbaric ritual.

Mr R Paneerselvam
 Tehsildar, Peraiyur Taluk
 Peraiyur, Madurai District
 Tamilnadu 625 703

The Panchayat President
 Karaineri Panchayat, Karaineri Village
 Peraiyur Taluk, Madurai District
 Tamilnadu 625 702

The District Collector
 Madurai District Collectorate
 Madurai 625 001
 Tamilnadu

One of BWC's letters is reproduced on the right.

Beauty Without Cruelty

I N D I A

An International Educational Charitable Trust for Animal Rights

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 Email: admin@bwcindia.org Website: www.bwcindia.org


13th April 2009

Mr R Paneerselvam
 Tehsildar, Peraiyur Taluk
 Peraiyur, Madurai District
 Tamilnadu 625 703

Dear Mr Paneerselvam,

We at Beauty Without Cruelty, an international animal rights organisation, are shocked and much saddened to read a news-report (originating from Karaikeni village, Madurai District) which describes a so called 'ritual' consisting of pulling out the intestines of a goat and a cockerel even when they are alive, performed at the village recently. Then the removed guts have been worn by a priestess. (A copy of the report is enclosed.) Surprisingly, this heinous incident has taken place in the presence of your-self and police personnel. It is all the more saddening to note that the helpless victims have had a lingering death after being alive for several hours.

While we have great regard for the culture and traditions of Tamilnadu, the history of which is decorated by such great souls like the Philanthropist-king Paari, sage-poet Thiruvalluvar and saint Ramalinga Adigalar, we cannot help but protest against this outrageous act which has been committed as part of a commemorative celebration of the war between two kings said to have been fought 500 years ago over an issue of the ownership of a bird.

Even though the ban on religious sacrifices is not in force in TN now, this ritual cannot claim any religious cover as it is only historical in its basis. Hence it attracts the provisions of The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, (P.C.A. 1960). We therefore request you to use your good offices and do the needful so that such a ritual is no longer practised as part of the commemorative celebration which is held every two years.

A reply from you would be greatly appreciated.

With best wishes,
 Yours sincerely,

(Diana Ratnagar)
 Chairperson, Beauty Without Cruelty – India

BWC News & Views

Veg@Lent

Lent is the 40-day period extending from Ash Wednesday to Easter when, in remembrance of Jesus' crucifixion, it is mandatory for Christians to follow a vegetarian diet, consuming neither meat, eggs nor hard liquor.

Beauty Without Cruelty gave 3,000 printed leaflets, each containing a dozen vegan recipes to the Rt. Rev. Valerian D'Souza, Bishop of Pune, who had them distributed soon after Lent began, after Sunday Mass, in parishes falling under the Pune Diocese.

We also sent some of these leaflets to our Christian members. We have a few copies left, and will be happy to send them (hard copies or via e-mail) to members on request.

AWBI Plays Ball with IDBI

Readers may have noticed the IDBI Bank's advertisement, on TV and in print, featuring a baby elephant kicking a ball. The caption says, "Not just for the big boys" followed by: "IDBI Bank — Banking for All".

Initially, Beauty Without Cruelty felt that Ogilvy & Mather and the IDBI had produced this concept unthinkingly. We wrote to the bank, pointing out that elephants should be in the wild, not in circuses or kicking balls, and the only way animals can be taught to perform unnatural acts is via torture, hunger and fear — normally, elephants do not willingly or happily kick balls.

We also told them it was due to the efforts of our organization that tigers, lions, panthers, bears and monkeys are no longer allowed to perform in circuses.

We had hoped it would not be long before the IDBI Bank withdrew the offending advertisement, which was far from animal-friendly. However their reply, pointing out that the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) had approved the advertisement, shocked BWC. Moreover, the Advertising Standards Council of India did not uphold a complaint received by them about the advertisement because of this no-objection certificate (NOC).

On approaching the AWBI for an explanation, they replied that "pre-shoot registration was issued on 8th. August 08 and NOC on 22nd September, 08. The "Hathisoccer" ad was shot in South Africa." They obviously chose to see no animal exploitation or cruelty in training a baby elephant to kick a ball in South Africa. The AWBI had, however, seen plenty wrong in a Vodafone Ad in which a pug was just running. Were the AWBI officials concerned conniving?

Animal Sacrifices

Two office bearers of the All India *Koli Samaj* and Delhi *Pradesh Koli Samaj* were approached by the BWC New Delhi city representative. Apprised of our efforts to eradicate animal sacrifice at the Ekvira Temple at Karla, Maharashtra, they acknowledged

the cruelty involved and agreed the custom should be stopped though it may be difficult, since it was an old one. They said they would speak to the president of the Thane section and to an ex-MP from Maharashtra, and BWC may contact them again after the elections.

Bullying Bulls

The cruel sport of bullock-cart racing, organized year-round mainly for the entertainment of villagers, enjoys political patronage. On April 24 2009 a non-violent, peaceful protest was organized by Ms. Sunedhra Bhadre and a few animal welfare organizations including BWC in Satara District, Maharashtra, outside the Collector's Office from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The placards and posters displayed, and slogans shouted, drew the attention of many passers-by. A letter to stop the cruel sport was also written to the collector by BWC.

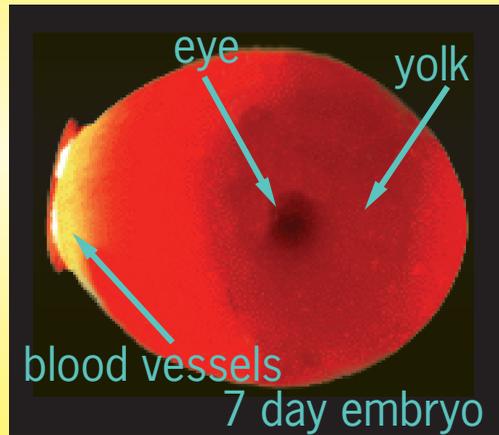
Cola Symbols

The good news is that, at long last, carbonated waters have begun displaying the veg/non-veg symbol on their drinks. We believe this was due to BWC filing an appeal, along with copies of relevant correspondence, with the assistant director-general (IF) of Health Services, Union Ministry of Health, asking to know the grounds on which the Government has exempted aerated or carbonated water companies from complying with the statutory mandate to affix vegetarian or non-vegetarian symbols on their products.

For Private Circulation.
Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers,
New Delhi, under No. 35650/77.
Printed on paper free of animal substances.

You abort somebody's baby...

**BOIL it, FRY it, add salt to taste
and make a MEAL of it...**



**That's exactly what you do
when you eat an **egg****

End this inhumanity. Be a vegetarian.

Concept: Noopur Datye



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