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COMPASSIONATE FRIEND



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

Death by Saliva



In this Issue:

Down Feathers

Unfortunate Parrots

Degree for Vegetarians in Hotel Management



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Spring 2019

From my Desk...

Animal Rights can Rescue Wild Life

Animal rights are the birthright of all animals, both wild and domestic, just like human rights are the birthright of all humans.

Certain persons have been putting forward warped ideas for conserving wild life. To promote "safe" tourism they want crocodiles culled.

Let it therefore be known loud and clear that animal rights alone can rescue wild life from hunters and their conservationist godfathers. The "hurdle" of animal rights is impossible to dispense with as was witnessed over the shooting of Avni, the tigress.

The proponents of animal rights will continue in their efforts to rescue crocodiles from conservationists and tourists who want them killed so that their skin can be utilised to make items such as bags and shoes.

This was proved when on 8 January 2019 a crocodile died due to old age at Bawamohatra (known as *magarmachha vala gaaon*) in Bemetra district of Chhattisgarh. Weeping villagers performed the last rites of Gangaram, their beloved crocodile, in the presence of about 500 persons, after which he was buried near the pond in which he lived.

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Feeding Monkeys on Highways Can Kill Them

Members have been drawing our attention to monkeys being run over by speeding vehicles on national highways like NH-565, NH-4 and on the Upper Ganga Canal Road.

Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand are not the only states that face this problem. BWC has again written to the Government requesting that many trees should be planted along all highways in the country and boards should be put up to dissuade motorists from throwing out food for wild life as well as other boards advising them to slow down at particular places where wildlife is likely to cross.



A baby monkey crying next to its dead mother killed on the road. *Photo courtesy: deccanchronicle.com*

People mistakenly think it is kind to feed monkeys when travelling, but it can turn out disastrous. The food attracts them onto the highways and in their enthusiasm to eat they do not notice any speeding vehicles. As a result of which umpteen hit and run drivers cause them injury, suffering and death.



Animal bristle-free paint brushes and leaflets were given to students at the Anjuman Islam English School at Versova, Mumbai by the India Development Fund. *Photo courtesy: Dr Narayan Iyer*

Foundation to distribute to school children. Upon using the brushes students themselves realise that they are good and they need never paint with brushes made from animal hair.

Spreading the Message

For over a decade BWC has been distributing 50,000 Veg@Lent recipe leaflets. It has encouraged Christians who for religious reasons abstain from eating meat during Lent, to try out nutritious vegan food.

Similarly, thousands of envelopes, each containing a BWC leaflet explaining why a non-animal paint brush should be used along with a sample brush and stickers were given to the India Development

Diana Ratnagar
Chairperson



Schools and Colleges can be members of BWC

Please consider enrolling educational institutions as BWC members for as little as ₹ 500 for a period of 5 years. (A gift form is enclosed.) BWC feels it is a good idea to inculcate reverence for all living creatures among students.

Death by Saliva

A bleak future awaits Edible-nest Swiftlets says Geetha Jaikumar



A pair of swiftlets. Photo courtesy: Neeraj Mishra

Nesting high up in inaccessible and remote limestone caves and cliffs of the Andaman and Nicobar islands, is a small brown bird known as the Indian Edible-nest Swiftlet (*Collocalia unicolor*). However, despite its nondescript appearance, the Swiftlet builds an amazing nest entirely out of its saliva which solidifies into a creamy white, cup-like structure that will eventually hold two precious eggs. When exposed to sunlight, the white nest glows with a golden sheen, due to which it is often referred to as 'white gold'. It is also priced like this precious metal and sells at an unbelievable \$4,000 per kilogram!

Unfortunately for the swiftlet, its beautifully constructed nest is edible and is considered a delicacy by humans. Made into a soup, it was once consumed exclusively in China by emperors in search of eternal life. According to traditional Chinese medicine practitioners,

the soup provides a boost to the immune system, smoothens the skin and acts as an aphrodisiac, which explains why the dish can sell for thousands of dollars.

While scientists say the soup has some genuine nutritional value, containing protein, carbohydrates and some fibre, the tall claims made about its healing and other properties are unsubstantiated and largely unproven.

Geographical range and distribution

There are about 80 species of swifts worldwide, of which the nests of five species are eaten. Of these five, two species make nests that are white in colour, due to the white colouring of their saliva. These white nests are more preferred and have the highest demand and are produced by the indigenous species found in Sri Lanka and India.

Andaman has two species of Swiftlets – the echo locating Edible-nest Swiftlet and the Glossy Swiftlet. Nesting deep within caves and poorly lit areas, the Swiftlets use echolocation for navigation with sound waves as they bounce off the surface. The Swiftlets tend to choose their nesting location primarily to escape their natural predators such as owls, raptors, snakes, geckoes, bats, cats, and rats. While the carefully chosen nesting sites are fairly safe from its natural predators, it is however unable to escape from the depredations of man, whose greed has been responsible for decimating their population to an alarming degree. These high dwelling birds feed on flying insects which they catch on the wing, with agile and daring aerial sorties. They drink water by skimming low over the surface of the water.

Illicit harvesting and smuggling

The swiftlets breed in colonies in caves mainly during the months of March and April in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. No other plant material other than the saliva of the bird is incorporated in the nest whose construction takes nearly a month to complete.

Harvesters separate the nests into three categories on the basis of quality: white nests are considered to be the most pure of the three because they lack contaminants like feathers and twigs. Therefore the poachers try to harvest the nest even before the eggs are laid. However, as it very often happens, the nests contain eggs or fledglings which are then ruthlessly thrown out and the nests removed. Swifts cannot perch on the ground and are unable to feed the helpless chicks that either die of starvation or are eaten alive by hordes of ants that are attracted to the broken eggs. Once the cave walls are stripped of the white nests, pickers wait for the birds to build new ones so that these too can be harvested. When the first nest is harvested the birds build a second and sometimes even a third nest though it may be yellow or black in colour. In the nineties, this kind of unbridled harvesting of the nests resulted in an almost 80 per cent drop in their population and the bird was eventually added to the endangered species list. Years ago BWC had requested the Indian Customs authorities to intercept the smugglers.

Conservation status and concerns

Despite protected status being accorded to the bird, illegal poaching continues to be rampant as it is considered to be a delicacy. Dubbed as the 'caviar of the East' and fancied by wealthy food patrons from all over the world, who travel to high end restaurants in the Far East to sample exotic fare, this plain looking, thick, pale yellow soup is one of the most expensive food items in the world.



A swift's nest with eggs. Photo courtesy: salanganesnest.blogspot.com

The late Dr Ravi Sankaran, a stalwart ornithologist, realized that for conservation efforts to succeed, it was imperative to involve the local population. The bird's listing in the Schedule I species of the Wildlife Protection Act (1972) hampered the conservation efforts planned with local support. However, after many years of appeal it was conditionally de-listed from the endangered list, only for experimental purposes. Dr Sankaran then motivated the nest collectors to become the protectors of the birds. They were taught to monitor the caves round-the-clock during the breeding season and protect them from poachers. As an incentive they were allowed to harvest the nests later on. This enabled the chicks to safely reach maturity, thus helping in the survival of the species and boosted the local economy too. The success of this collaborative venture resulted in the permanent delisting of the species from the endangered category list. (BWC does not encourage the consumption of any item of animal origin however humanely derived – Editor)

The scientists at the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), Coimbatore, have also developed alternative populations using the nests of Glossy Swiftlets, another species found here, which



Harvested swifts' nests. Photo courtesy: birdsnestusa.weebly.com



Bird's nest soup. Photo courtesy: birdsnestusa.weebly.com

uses moss, twigs, leaves and flowers to make a nest and binds it using saliva. The eggs of the Edible-nest Swiftlets are transferred to these nests and the Glossy Swiftlets act as foster parents. The young Edible-nest Swiftlets raised in this way have successfully returned to breed, thus establishing new nesting populations.

As with so many traditional Chinese cravings, like shark fin soup, elephant ivory, bile from the Moon bears or medicine made from tiger bones and other body parts, the growing demand for bird's nest soup has spelled trouble for the Swiftlets. While conservation efforts in India have been somewhat successful, large scale harvesting of nests continues unabated in Thailand, Sri Lanka and other places. Fuelled by rising demand, and the huge sums which the pillaged nests command the future of this little bird hangs in balance.



Geetha Jaikumar is the Principal of a Women's college in Chennai. A Life Member and Executive of BWC India, she is passionate about bird watching and trekking in wilderness areas.

Down Feathers

80% of down used worldwide is live plucked by firmly holding geese or ducks by their necks or wings and ruthlessly ripping out their soft, fine, white feathers says Khurshid Bhathena

In January 2019 BWC wrote to the Prime Minister requesting him to ban the import of down feathers obtained from geese and ducks just like he had banned the import of *foie gras* in August 2014.

Light and fluffy feathers found under the tough exterior feathers of birds are called down. Such feathers that mostly grow on the bird's belly are naturally soft, fine and warm, and meant to protect the birds. But humans steal down from geese and ducks and keep themselves warm. As these feathers are soft and trap heat they are used to stuff pillows, quilts, duvets, sleeping bags and winter clothing such as quilted coats and puffer jackets.

No one waits for birds to shed or moult their feathers, or die naturally, so down from live geese or ducks is wrenched off. Feathers could be a so-called by-product of *foie gras* production, but much more likely to be cruelly plucked off live birds.

Foie gras and down production are inter-related. Both involve intense torture for the birds. *Foie gras* is the liver of ducks, geese or guinea fowls used to make *pâté de foie gras*. It is extremely cruel: ducks are force fed several times a day with a funnel pushed down their throats till such time as their livers get ten times their normal size. They are then slaughtered and their diseased livers turned into a paste called *pâté de foie gras*. Birds that have been slaughtered are scalded in hot water for a couple of minutes making it easier to remove the feathers, often with a plucking machine.

Since it is not possible to gather feathers at the time of moulting, they are forcefully pulled out of live birds leaving bleeding, painful follicles. China, Poland and Hungary are the main suppliers of down, and about 80% of such feathers used worldwide are live plucked



Goose being plucked for down.
Photos courtesy: fashionunited.uk

by firmly holding the geese or ducks by their necks or wings and ruthlessly ripping out their soft, fine, white feathers. The birds' skin gets ripped in several places but it is considered routine and is just sewn up with a needle and thread. The birds are left thus to bear the pain, only to be subjected to the same ordeal again and again when their feathers re-grow.

In 2018 quilted down jackets became quite popular among celebrities and politicians in India. Called puffer jackets, or bivy down jackets, they were marketed by high fashion brands as the ultimate stylish and warm winter-wear for men.

It is totally unnecessary to torture geese and ducks for their down when alternatives are easily available to use as padding and insulation for bedding and winter clothing. Most 5-star hotel pillows contain goose and duck down although simal/kapok (silk cotton from the tree), fibres such as cotton, hemp, bamboo, and filling materials like Comforel (polyester fibre) are good replacements for down, and are readily available.

 **Khurshid Bhathena is a Trustee and Honorary Secretary of BWC India.**

TRAFFIC

the wildlife trade monitoring network

Parrots of India in Illegal Trade

Malabar Parakeet*
(Blue-winged Parakeet)
Psittacula columboides (~38cm)
Local name: *Karapatam*



Vernal Hanging-parrot*
(Indian Lorikeet)
Loriculus vernalis (~14cm)
Local name(s): *Latkan tota* & *Vandroot*

Finsch's Parakeet*
(Grey-headed Parakeet & Eastern Slaty-headed Parakeet)
Psittacula finschii (~36cm)
Local name: *Jhaiya tota*



Himalayan Parakeet*
(Slaty-headed Parakeet)
Psittacula himalayana (~41cm)
Local name: *Jhiri tota*



Red-breasted Parakeet*
(Moustached Parakeet)
Psittacula alexandri (~38cm)
Local name: *Madanghor suga*



Alexandrine Parakeet*
(Large Indian Parakeet)
Psittacula eupatria (~53cm)
Local name(s): *Chandana Pahari tota* & *Rai tota*



Long-tailed Parakeet*
(Red-cheeked Parakeet & Pink-cheeked Parakeet)
Psittacula longicauda
Local name(s): *Chandana Pahari tota*

Illegal trade in Parrots

For centuries, parrots have been kept as pets mainly because of their beauty, charm, long life span and their astonishing ability to "talk". This has in turn created demand that has led to an organized illegal trade in the species. Despite the blanket ban since 1990-91 on trade in all Indian bird species, hundreds of parrots are collected and traded annually in India. The adult parrots are traded throughout the year with chicks arriving in trade between December and June. Parrots are caught using nets and bird-lime.

Out of the 12 species of parrots found in India, eight species* have regularly been recorded in Indian bird markets during bird trade surveys undertaken by TRAFFIC India.

Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Hunting of or trade in all Indian parrot species is prohibited in India. Schedule I, Part III: Derby's Parakeet *Psittacula derbyana* Schedule IV: All other species of parrots

CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora): All Indian species of parrots are in Appendix II of CITES except for the Rose-ringed Parakeet that is not listed in CITES.

IUCN Status:

Near Threatened: Nicobar Parakeet *Psittacula caniceps*, Long-tailed Parakeet *Psittacula longicauda* & Derby's Parakeet *Psittacula derbyana*.

Least Concern: All other parrot species in India.

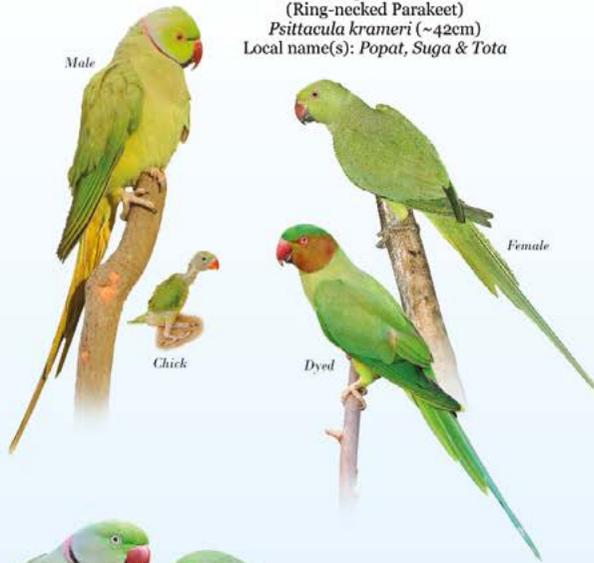
Identify

Alexandrine Parakeet
Derby's Parakeet
Finsch's Parakeet
Himalayan Parakeet
Long-tailed Parakeet
and Lories
Malabar Parakeet
Nicobar Parakeet
Plum-headed Parakeet
blue-grey Parakeet
Red-breasted Parakeet
Rose-ringed Parakeet
Rosy-headed Parakeet
Vernal Hanging-parrot

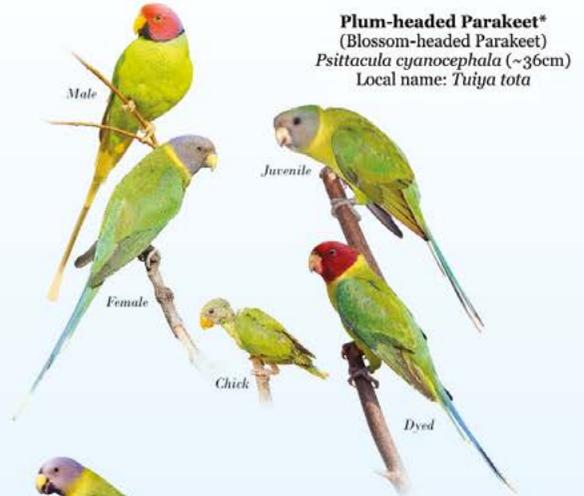
India is home to 12 species of parrots - 11 parakeets and one hanging-parrot. Two of the parakeet species, the Malabar Parakeet *Psittacula columboides* and Nicobar Parakeet *Psittacula caniceps* are endemic to India.



Rose-ringed Parakeet*
(Ring-necked Parakeet)
Psittacula krameri (~42cm)
Local name(s): *Popat, Suga & Tota*



Plum-headed Parakeet*
(Blossom-headed Parakeet)
Psittacula cyanocephala (~36cm)
Local name: *Tuiya tota*



Rosy-headed Parakeet
(Eastern Blossom-headed Parakeet)
Psittacula roseata (~36cm)
Local name: *Phlutsi tota*

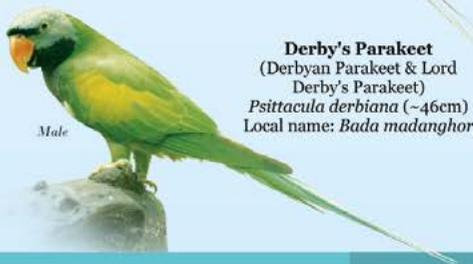


Malabar Parakeet
(Malabar Parakeet & Lord Parakeet)
Psittacula daudata (~47cm)
Local name(s): *Chauraulo & Kariak*



Nicobar Parakeet
(Blyth's Parakeet)
Psittacula caniceps (~61cm)
Local name(s): *Chauraulo & Kariak*

Derby's Parakeet
(Derbyan Parakeet & Lord Derby's Parakeet)
Psittacula derbiana (~46cm)
Local name: *Bada madanghor*



Images and illustrations not to scale

Identification Tips

- Malabar Parakeet:** Distinctive maroon-red shoulder patch
- Lord Derby's Parakeet:** Distinctive mauve-coloured breast
- Malabar Parakeet:** Grey head with creamish coloured tail-tip
- Malabar Parakeet:** Deep yellow tail-tip with slaty coloured head
- Malabar Parakeet:** Long blue-green tipped tail, pinkish-red cheeks, green cap, broad black moustachial lines
- Malabar Parakeet:** Distinctive yellow-tipped tail and vermiculated green wings
- Malabar Parakeet:** Grey-headed, largest among Indian parakeets and restricted to Nicobar
- Plum-headed Parakeet:** Male has a plum-magenta hood while the female has a dark violet-grey to cyan or blue-coloured hood
- Malabar Parakeet:** The only parakeet species with a red-breast, also has a black upcurved neck band
- Malabar Parakeet:** Male has thin pink and black neck band, which is inconspicuous in the female
- Malabar Parakeet:** Male has a lilac-tinged pink hood which is bluish in female
- Hanging-parrot:** Green coloured sparrow-sized hanging-parrots

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Concept & Images by Abrar Ahmed
Illustration of Nicobar Parakeet
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Rosy-headed Parakeet image by
Vijay Anand Ismavel
Design & Print by Kriti Communications



TRAFFIC India carries out research and provides analysis, support and encouragement to efforts aimed to ensure that wildlife trade is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

In India, TRAFFIC operates as a programme division of WWF-India.

Unfortunate Parrots

A man typically sits on the footpath with a cage containing a poached and trained parrot says Charlotte Chavarin



Rose-ringed parakeet. *Photo courtesy: Neeraj Mishra*

Pet parrots are not only seen caged in houses, but also accompany road-side fortune tellers. They are trained to pick cards which are then “read” to the client. Since parrots (and munias also trapped from the forest and trained) are being confiscated under wildlife laws, they have in some places been replaced by caged guinea pigs that have been similarly trained for the purpose of so-called future prediction.

Killi josyam or parrot astrology is famous in some areas of Tamil Nadu but has spread to other places in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Puducherry. Most of these fortune-tellers hail from the Kambalathu Naicker community

and worship goddess Jakkamma. Many years ago the fortune-tellers of Goraguntepalya in Tamil Nadu were raided and 160 parakeets were confiscated from them but they did not give up practicing *killi josyam*. During the breeding season they themselves are known to poach parrot fledglings from forest nests and train them to pick cards.

A man typically sits on the footpath with a cage containing a poached and trained parrot. He has a pack of 27 tarot like cards (depicting deities) which he spreads out in front of him. When some one asks for his/her fortune to be told, the man takes the parrot out from one of the compartments of the

cage which is very little bigger than the parrot itself. He then instructs the parrot to pick a card which it does at random and hands over to the fortune teller who then based on the image on the card “reads” the fortune of the person!

To the misfortune of parakeets, roadside fortune tellers or parrot astrologers have not stopped keeping them. Despite the birds which are always found in a very poor condition, being confiscated by the police and taken to rescue centres, the activity some how continues. For example, a few years back the forest department personnel caught 11 rose-ringed parakeets (a protected species under the Wildlife Act) at Bengaluru’s Sajjan Road Circle fair. Confined to tiny cages, they were dehydrated, their wings (including primary feathers) had been clipped, and the claws and feet of some had been amputated.



Incarcerated to tell fortunes. Photo courtesy: France Niox

On seeing parrot astrologers operating on Suffren Street, Saint Ange Road and Bharati Park areas of Puducherry, I first approached the Forest Department last year in October. Then, in December 2018 BWC wrote to the Lieutenant Governor, Puducherry UT,

requesting a crack down on *killi josyam* since it involved the illegal use of parrots and of course cruelty.

However in January 2019 parrot astrologers were again found on the footpaths of Rue Dumas and Rue Saint James, the touristy areas of Puducherry. BWC has again complained to the Lieutenant Governor and Forest Department Minister and Secretary.

 *Charlotte Chavarin is an animal activist and life member of BWC India.*



Killi josyam anyone? Your unfortunate fortune teller awaits you...

Photo courtesy: Vivekan Brunschwig

Degree for Vegetarians in Hotel Management Courses

NCHMCT issued a notification declaring availability of Vegetarian Degree option in 63 IHMs says CA C R Luniya

An English language proverb “necessity is the mother of invention” motivated my success. As my son was passionate about cooking and wanted to go in for a degree in Hotel Management, we started searching for a course for vegetarians in this field. But, to our surprise and disappointment we discovered that learning to prepare non-vegetarian food was compulsory to get a degree in Hotel Management.

We found that very few people were aware of this and those who were aware and wanted to study hotel management either gave up the idea, or joined and reluctantly learnt non-vegetarian cooking. No one had tried to fight it out. So I thought why shouldn't I?

Vegetarian students were not only losing an opportunity to learn veg culinary skills but by not doing the course could not even learn other subjects taught by hotel management institutes and were therefore deprived of a career in hotel management. There are more than 40 subjects taught like Accommodation, Law, Travel & Tourism, HR Management and Accounting, of which only one is Culinary Skills (cooking) and it includes both veg and non-veg, so for the sake of just half a subject ethical vegetarian students were being deprived from taking up a career in the world's number one business.

Perseverance Paid

Seven years ago I began talking about and convincing people of the need of an exclusive course for vegetarians in hotel management. Initially nobody was in a mood to listen to me. They said it would be impossible in view of an international demand for non-veg food. I argued on many counts. Luckily every one



राष्ट्रीय होटल प्रबन्ध एवं कॅटरिंग तकनीकी परिषद
 राष्ट्रीय संस्थान, नई दिल्ली - 110 028 (एन.सी.ई.टी.डी.)
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HOTEL MANAGEMENT AND CATERING TECHNOLOGY
 (An autonomous body under Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India)
 9-34, ईस्टर - 42, नईदिल्ली - 201309 (एन.सी.ई.टी.डी.)
 A-34, Sector 62, NOIDA - 201309 (Uttar Pradesh), वेबसाइट: www.nchmct.ac.in

नियंत्रण मंत्रालय
केंद्र, नई दिल्ली

Dated: 9th November 2018

NOTIFICATION

This is for information of the public in general and the Hotel management aspirant (Indian Nationals) in particular that as per Govt. of India policy, NCHMCT will be conducted by "National Testing Agency" an Central Government Agency, created by the Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India, to conduct all major Entrance Examination in the Country.

Dedicated Portal for calling the on-line application to appear in **NCHM JEE 2019** for admission to "3years 6 semesters B.Sc.(HHA) Program" in more than 63 IHMs (Govt. as well as Private) under the academic umbrella of NCHMCT will be opened by "National Testing Agency" on **15th January 2019** at <https://www.nta.ac.in> and the tentative date of on-line NCHM JEE 2019 Exam is **27th April 2019** (last Saturday of the month of April, as per the usual schedule so far maintained by NCHMCT).

This time NCHM JEE will be an on-line exam only and there will be no option for 'pen and paper' exam. Exam will be held in 33 or more cities in all over India. The exam scheme will remain as same as the previous years on the following components.

S.N	Subject	No. of Questions	Duration
1	Numerical Ability and Analytical Aptitude	30	3.00 Hrs
2	Reasoning and Logical Deduction	30	
3	General Knowledge & Current Affairs	30	
4	English Language	60	
5	Aptitude for Service Sector	50	
TOTAL		200	

Only Vegetarian practical option in the B.Sc.(HHA) Program will also be available in all the affiliated IHMs for which the candidate has to opt Veg Practical only, on their joining at the allotted Institute after admission.

There is a direct admission scheme for the rank holder Indian Nationals (not NRI or PIO) of the School board as per the following criteria and who need not to appear in the NCHM JEE.

"Each IHMs shall have three seats earmark for 10-2 rank holders (one each for Arts, Science and Commerce stream) from among 1st to 200 rank holders from respective streams from recognized Boards of school examination wherein up to 2 lacs candidates appear or 1st to 500 rank holders from Board of Examination where 2 lacs to 5 lacs candidates take examination. The inter-se-merit from recognized School Boards of examination shall be at par"

There is a different scheme for direct admission of Foreign Nationals (FN), Non Resident Indians (NRI) and Person of Indian Origin (PIO) or Overseas Citizen of India) students. They also need not to appear in the NCHM JEE. The detailed scheme, procedure for admission and fee structure is available in the scheme, available at www.nchmct.ac.in/admission.

Sd/-
Director (A & F) and Member Secretary
NCHMCT, Noida

appreciated my demand and after every discussion supported the idea. Simultaneously, I noted all counter-views and strengthened my future arguments. As a vegetarian, I got a large support base. Vegans supported me in my arguments too.

Throughout my campaign, I concentrated on the right to ethical education and pointed out to people that Indians were basically vegetarian in their food habits because most non-vegetarians ate meat occasionally only. I also pointed out that it was the masala used that was responsible for the taste of all non-veg Indian food. Even hardcore non-vegetarians supported me in demanding for the rights of

vegetarian youngsters who were reluctant to learn non-vegetarian cooking for their Hotel Management degrees.

More than 97% Indians can be considered predominantly vegetarian as most non-vegetarians eat flesh occasionally (usually in a restaurant once or twice a month) and therefore almost all the food they eat is vegetarian.

Slowly, slowly I started getting positive responses from individuals in their personal capacities. I met leaders of all religions but initially the response received from them was at most lip service. Nobody gave me any positive, concrete responses on an organisational level. But I persisted and was confident that my aim would be achieved. With every negative response, I generated more energy to persevere.

I wrote around 8,000 letters to our respected Prime Minister, Ministers, Members of Parliament and other leaders who mattered. I distributed 10,000 post cards requesting people to send them to PM and Tourism Minister. Thousands of e-mails and many WhatsApp messages were also circulated, some newspapers covered the demand, and an online campaign was initiated on Change.org for which I got support from around the world.

Eventually I started getting encouraging responses from Ministers and MPs. Almost 100 MPs supported me. They wrote to the Prime Minister and Tourism Minister to consider the demand. Prominent among them are respected Dy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Shri PJ Kurien, Union Ministers Shri Arun Jaitley, Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Shri Satya Pal Singh and Smt Maneka Gandhi. Support came from all parties, all religions and communities. The issue was also raised in both the houses of Parliament. Ultimately, after tremendous effort, the vegetarian option was granted. It happened I believe due to pressure from PMO and efforts of some officials of the Tourism Ministry.

Breakthrough

Students who had taken admission for the present Hotel Management Course were asked whether they wanted to opt for the new vegetarian only degree course and 40 students from 2 Institutes of Hotel Management opted for it. Without publicity from the Government, in the second year 135 students chose this course in 6 Institutes of Hotel Management; and, as many as 156 students in the third academic year 2018-19.

With continuous follow up, in 2018 the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) issued a Notification declaring availability of Veg Degree option in 63 Institutes of Hotel Management.

This was followed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development writing to the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and University Grants Commission (UGC) to create public awareness about the availability of the option of obtaining a hotel management degree by learning vegetarian cooking only.

By the time the Veg Degree option materialised several years had gone by and my son for who I had taken up cudgels was unable to avail of this wonderful option. But I have the satisfaction of knowing that many other students have benefited and vegetarianism is being boosted.

Benefits Galore

By creating the vegetarian only option in every Hotel Management Institute there will be healthy competition and more and more vegetarian students with a passion for the culinary arts will join and the overall standard of this industry will go up. In a way this will be "Skill Development" (culinary skill) and in turn give an opportunity for "Job Creation". It could also be connected with "Swachh Bharat" and "Healthy India" and vegetarian food can be made an attraction by the tourism sector. There are pilgrimage centers in India where non-veg food is not allowed. The vegetarian degree holders could start their own restaurants at these places or could work there.

The vegetarian business community has not involved itself in this industry because non-vegetarianism goes against their beliefs. When world class vegetarian chefs are available, a lot of investment will come from within India. More and more research will be done in the field of food and ingredients, and the world will get more nutritious and delicious vegetarian recipes. As vegetarian consumers we will also taste the fruits of guaranteed, authentic vegetarian cooking in world class facilities.

Many renowned chains of hotels, airlines and passenger cruises operating internationally that serve pure vegetarian food will be able to provide it with authenticity and confidence when they have qualified vegetarian chefs.

Every body thinks of jobs for chefs in 5-Star hotels, but what about jobs in other big hotels and restaurants? We can change the mindset of people. Those having Vegetarian degrees in Hotel Management will get opportunities all over the world. India can become a hub to provide skilled vegetarian chefs, similar to our information-technology sector.

My Expectations

I request support from the readers of *Compassionate Friend* for the Veg Degree by registering on www.tinyurl.com/VegDegree.

Please create awareness among relatives and friends about the need of this degree which teaches only vegetarian cooking in hotel management courses.

Whenever you visit hotels for seminars or conferences, please demand separate sections for veg and non-veg with clear demarcation.

On visits to restaurants try to visit their kitchen and if vegetarian preparations are not separately cooked, suggest it be implemented. Use any contacts you may have in the hotel industry by asking them to have vegetarian chefs, and in the Government to create an option for a vegetarian degree in every Institute of Hotel Management.

Lastly, do remember learning to be a vegetarian chef will indirectly draw more people towards vegetarianism and will keep them away from non-veg, which in turn will stop killing animals and we will move faster toward a cruelty free world.



Chandrashekhar R Luniya is a Chartered Accountant, a vegetarian activist, and BWC life member. He can be reached at VegDegree@gmail.com

BWC Exhibition at the Theosophical Society



BWC volunteers who helped to put up the poster exhibition (left). Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society inaugurates the BWC Poster Exhibition in Adyar, Chennai (right). Photos courtesy: Elka Sinha

Vegan Recipe *Yam*

Yam/elephant foot/jimikand/karunai kizhangu/kaachil/kavuttu/khamalu/chupri alu/ratalu/suvarna gadde/suran are some of the common names by which varieties of yams are known in India. (Sweet potato/*Shakarand* is also a tuber but different to the yam and unrelated to the potato.)

The yam is an excellent source of Vitamin C, B6, potassium, manganese and fibre. No wonder yam is listed as one of the world's healthiest foods. Moreover, regular consumption of yams can help provide a natural alternative to hormonal replacement in women during menopause.

Suran Curry (serves 4)

Ingredients

- 500 grams *suran*, peeled and cut into cubes
- 2 tsps lemon juice
- 10 grams tamarind
- 2 tbsps oil
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 inch piece ginger, minced
- 100 grams green peas
- 1 tbsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 tbsps coriander leaves, chopped



Preparation

Boil *suran* till tender in salt water to which lime juice has been added. Strain the water into a bowl and put it aside for later.

Soak tamarind in ½ cup water for 5 minutes. Squeeze out the water into a bowl and discard the tamarind.

Heat oil and toss in the mustard seeds followed by onion and ginger. Fry till colour changes.

Add green peas, other spices and salt. Mix well.

Add coconut milk.

Cover and cook till the peas are almost done.

Add *suran* and tamarind water.

Simmer for 10 minutes.

Garnish with coriander leaves.

Serve with rice or *roti*.

**Do visit www.bwcindia.org/Web/Recipes/Recipesindex.html
for an assortment of Beauty Without Cruelty's
tested and tasted, healthy and delicious vegan recipes.**

Down Feathers



Soft, fine and tiny feathers that keep geese and ducks warm are ruthlessly wrenched off and used as stuffing for expensive bedding and winter clothing. Alternatives such as simal/kapok and man-made filling materials are easily available and good replacements. Do not use puffer jackets & coats, or pillows & quilts that contain down because they are products of torture.



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