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COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

Journal of Beauty Without Cruelty – India

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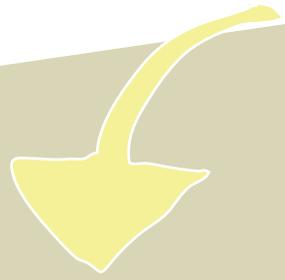


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Editor's Note



Front cover: Goats wander peacefully in the city, blissfully unaware of human interest in them as food.

Photo: *Amruta Ubale*

Back cover: Educational programmes now being offered by BWC in Pune schools, thanks to a financial grant from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust.

Photos: *Roshni D'Silva*

BWC City Representatives:

Vishwas Ghushe

BWC Bhopal City Representative
bhopal.cityrep@bwcindia.org

Dr. Geetha Jaikumar

BWC Chennai City Representative
chennai.cityrep@bwcindia.org

P. Krishnan

BWC Ernakulam City Representative
ernakulam_city_rep@bwcindia.org

All BWC Members are requested to send their e-mail ids to admin@bwcindia.org along with their name and membership number from our address labels.



Beauty Without Cruelty – India

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie, Pune 411 040.

Tel: 0(20) 2686 1166; Fax: 0(20) 2686 1420.

E-mail: admin@bwcindia.org; website: www.bwcindia.org

Editorial



Ashoke Dasgupta

Counteract Global Warming by Becoming Vegetarian

One of the reasons wildlife tend to move out of, or away from, their habitat is because of changes in the vegetative profile of the area due to global climatic changes. The animals find it difficult to adapt to the new eco-system. Many species are no longer found in the jungles which they once roamed in. Numerous jungles have also shrunk in size due to human encroachment. For example, elephants have suddenly materialized among human dwellings, where they were not seen earlier.

Over the last 40 years, the Sundarbans have lost 28 percent of wildlife habitat due to global warming, resulting in tigers migrating out of the core reserve. In contrast, some lions preferring open grasslands have moved out of Gir, presumably due to the forest becoming denser.

Cattle, sheep, and other ruminants are one of the main sources of the greenhouse gas called methane, 20-25 times as potent as carbon dioxide, which contributes to global warming.

Animal husbandry, which falls under the banner of agriculture in India, follows mainly traditional methods. Yet there we cannot be complacent, because meat production is being modernized to supply multinationals like Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonald's and Pizza Hut, as well as for meat export promotion.

Consequently the environmental problems and environmental destruction caused by modern animal farming in the west has to be noted in India too, where the environment is already facing the problem of overpopulation.

At last, a "No Meat, no Heat" program is being promoted by environmental scientists who have realized that a vegetarian diet will reduce the progress of global warming. They are advising people to shun meat, to begin with, at least one day of the week.

A study by a German consumer protection group called Foodwatch has found that carnivorous diets are responsible for almost twice the greenhouse gas emissions of those of vegetarians. Their calculations were based on emissions, including methane, produced by animals, as well as food production emissions from feed and fertilizer production and the use of farmland.

Padma Bhushan Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, the U.N.'s top climate scientist who chairs the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environmental Program, says people should consider eating less meat as a way of combating global warming. U.N. figures suggest that meat production puts more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than transport.

Pachauri has been appointed to a second six-year term as chair of the Nobel Prize-winning IPCC, the body that collates and evaluates climate data for the world's governments.

"The UN Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that direct emissions from meat production account for about 18 percent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions," he told *BBC News*: "So I want to highlight the fact that among options for mitigating climate change, changing diets is something one should consider." All of which goes to show that the most important thing you can do to help animals, and to counteract global warming, is to become a vegetarian.

It was noted that ironically, to celebrate the World Environment Day in June, WWF India and the makers of Titan watches released their Titan-WWF collection of wrist watches with Indian endangered species on the dials, but with animal-leather straps. Like breeding livestock, the use of any animal products would increase global warming.

We apologize for the non-appearance of *Compassionate Friend* during 2008 due to personnel shortages. We look forward to receiving your suggestions, and stories of your experiences with animals.

We are sorry to bid good-bye to Dr. Ranjit Konkar as editor because he has moved to Ahmedabad. He is still a BWC trustee.



Sacrifices May be Devices for Feasts

By Amruta Ubale and Varsha Kulkarni

Rich and poor alike suffer sorrow, but the poor suffer hardship as well. There are those among the poor who, for reasons best known to them, hope to improve their fortunes via animal sacrifice. Beauty Without Cruelty has been campaigning and lobbying against this barbaric practice.

Every year, a *jatra* (procession) takes place at the Ekvira Temple in Karla, Lonavala. Hundreds of goats and chickens are sacrificed to proclaim the people's devotion to their mother goddess, Ekvira. Terrified animals are cast to the ground, and their throats slit in front of each other. Men, women and children watch this delightful practice.

Our objective is to make people understand that sacrificing animals for the presumed betterment of humans is a religion-sponsored superstition.

We appealed to residents of the Karla area, and the Koli community who participate in the *jatra*, to donate blood as an offering to the goddess Ekvira, instead of sacrificing animals. The blood offered the goddess would benefit humans.

We visited villages to persuade them to donate blood instead of sacrificing animals.

This message was appreciated by some, especially the younger Koli community members. Others objected to it, and most expressed the opinion that the alternative suggested by us may take a few years to be implemented.

We met the *gram panchayat* of Vehir Village, Karla. They expressed dislike for these activities, citing the associated alcohol consumption, hooliganism, stench of putrid flesh and unhygienic conditions created by the butchers' shops.

We took police permission to put up boards displaying various sections of legislation prohibiting animal sacrifice.

We also met the collector who was empathetic, promising to do whatever he could.

We conducted a survey in various Koli communities and schools and, based on this data, a blood donation camp was arranged on April 12, the day of the procession, with the help of Inlaks Et Budhrani Hospital.

Two signboards were put up near the temple: one stating the law, and the other appealing for blood donations to appease the deity instead of animal slaughter. We distributed leaflets appealing to the public to desist from animal sacrifices. We also visited some villages which play a leading role in the Ekvira fest.



A child helps a man at an illegal butcher's shop.

We Visit Pen Village

On March 28, about a dozen personnel associated with BWC's Pune and Mumbai offices met the Koli community at the Masali Lilav Kendra, about two hours by road from Mumbai.

Mr. Vijay Kumar, a prominent member of the community, was in favour of stopping the sacrifices. He liked the idea of blood donations instead, but felt it may be difficult to bring the villagers round to this view.

However others like Mr. Namdev Vaskar, whose family holds the honour and right of sacrificing the first goat, opposed the idea. They

considered it an issue of prestige, respect and standing in their community.

Some wondered how anyone could even think of breaking with tradition. BWC's Mr. Suresh Agarwala pointed out that the once-honourable practice of *sati* (burning widows on their deceased husband's pyres) had been outlawed, so there was no reason why animal sacrifices shouldn't be stopped.

Ms. Priyanka Bapat suggested substituting a symbolic gesture like chopping the head off a waxen or paper goat, or extracting some goat blood by syringe to pour over the *devi's* feet. This seemed acceptable to Kumar, but not to Vaskar.

Vaskar said most families from the village killed a goat, on the auspicious day, as an offering to the goddess. This village would account for 40-50 goats. He also said that, if the goats were not killed for the goddess, he would have to arrange a mutton lunch for the villagers. It seemed to boil down to a non-vegetarian feast. We felt the sacrifices were but a device for personal enjoyment.

He asked us why we weren't stopping Muslims from sacrificing goats instead of telling them what to do. We replied that we would, eventually, but wanted to begin with the Hindus, who were spiritually closer to us.

We Visit Choul Village

Choul, about five hours by road from Pune, is near Pen. The Choul meeting was kicked off by a village woman who made no secret of her displeasure with our suggestions. She was infuriated by our audacity in even suggesting something like this, and declared that they would not stop goat sacrifices under any circumstances.

An old man asked who would be responsible if the village was punished by the goddess for stopping the sacrifices. He said that, just three weeks ago, they had prayed to the goddess all night, to cure those of their children suffering from chicken-pox.

We told him some of our children, and many others in and around Mumbai, had also suffered from this ailment, which had nothing to do with any goddess' curse. The villagers did not accept this.

We pointed out that there was a difference between faith and

blind faith, but this didn't go down well. Neither did our suggestion of removing goats' blood by syringe.

Though some of the villagers were nodding appreciatively, the atmosphere was charged with the palpable anger of others. We wound up the meeting because the discussion was leading nowhere.

In discussions among ourselves, we felt that expecting the villagers to understand our viewpoints on an annual visit may not work. We need to build a rapport with them, possibly by associating with a social organization which helps them, to understand their day-to-day difficulties and provide solutions.

We could introduce them to alternate sources of income for the months they can't fish, and help their youngsters learn trades like those of the electrician or plumber. They may then get to know us better and be more receptive to our ideas.



Unaware of its impending doom, a baby goat mingles with the festive crowd.

We also felt we should study the literature of the temple and its divinities, and develop animal rights programs on radio and TV to reach the illiterate.

The Auspicious Day Dawns

Though we worked round the clock during the run-up to April 12, trying to contact the concerned authorities to stop sacrificing animals, we met with but modest success.

Karla is about three hours by road from Pune, near Lonavala. We reached it in the morning. Parking its vehicles, the BWC team of 15 walked to the Inlaks & Budhrani Hospital's blood donation camp. A Police Control Room had been set up. We saw a row of butchers' shops, and were surprised by the

number of sheds and stalls which had been set up.

None of them had been there when we visited the spot two days ago. While some of them were selling the general merchandise usually to be found at processions, others were selling animals kept in a large number of—possibly unauthorized—stalls.

Hundreds of goats were in a temporary shed. There was no place for them to move, nor any food or water for the animals. Though most of them were in the shed, others were tied close together outside the butchers' shops. Truckfuls of chickens were parked in the area.

BWC staff tried to convince the devotees to stop killing animals. We distributed pamphlets and requested them to donate their blood as an offering to the goddess Ekvira instead. Our message

was that no goddess asks the sacrificing of life, since every form of life is created by her. A goddess is a mother-figure, and no mother wants the taking of life.

While distributing these pamphlets, we saw devotees carrying chickens and goats. The goats were distressed and exhausted. No water was given them. If they could not walk, the devotees beat them with sticks and dragged them along. One man dragged a baby goat the rest of the way when it collapsed in the middle of the road.

The chickens were carried inhumanely, upside-down and with their legs tied together. Women were selling chickens from crammed baskets at the temple staircase. Their legs were tied, even inside the baskets. The stressed-out cocks were pecking at each other. They were kept under these conditions the whole day without food or water and must have been suffering the pangs of hunger and thirst.

Dark Butchery Without a Soul

The butchers' stalls were covered by tattered plastic sheets. Goats were short-tethered neck-to-neck with no space to move. Some were tethered in the stalls, while others were tied outside.

The butchers were slaughtering and skinning the animals in front of the live ones. One may imagine their terror. On one corner, we were appalled to see a 10-year-old boy



Goats short-tethered with the chopping block under their noses.



Chickens being bought and sold from close confinement in baskets. They hang upside down during their hopefully brief liberation.

skinning an animal and chopping it up.

A few feet ahead were the *pucca*, constructed butcher shops, facing sheds housing hundreds of goats. As we approached, goats were being dragged to the butchers' shops bleating loudly, apparently pleading for mercy. As each goat was cast to the ground for its throat to be slit, others were waiting in line. Their feet were tied and they had no choice but to watch the cruel fate that awaited them.

When we took our cameras out, we were taken aback by a butcher who welcomed our photography, even suggesting good shots. People are usually leery of being photographed in such activities, but he wasn't, so we took many a picture.

On returning to the blood donation camp we found that, though there had been a good response, the people we had targeted hadn't attended. While distributing our

pamphlets, we had been told by many that our target segment couldn't donate blood because they were drunk. Others, who were carrying animals, didn't want to hear us out. We closed the blood donation camp at 6:00 p.m.

Seeing a man slitting a goat's throat outside the blood donation camp, in the open—not an authorized place—we approached a policeman who expressed inability to take action and advised us to lodge a complaint at the Lonavala police station. Being as helpless as the constable, we could only take more photographs. We learnt later that a few butchers with unauthorised stalls were fined Rs. 600.00 each.

If one drops ink by a dropper into a glass of water a drop at a time, nothing seems to be happening—until there falls a single drop which turns the whole glass of water blue. We hope our efforts may prove analogous to this phenomenon, familiar to high school chemistry students in titration experiments,

and that animal sacrifice may become a thing of the past some day.

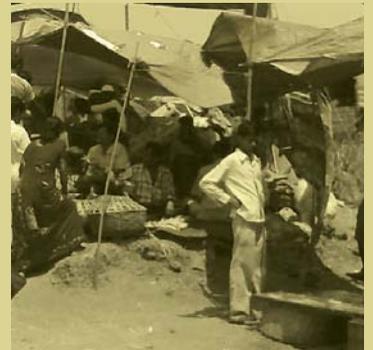


Amruta Ubale is an education officer at Beauty Without Cruelty.

Varsha Kulkarni is a research officer at Beauty Without Cruelty.



Butcher slaughtering goat in open



Chickens being sold from baskets



Goat baby at temple doorstep

Beauty Lies in the Eyes of the Beholder

By Sanskruti Marathe



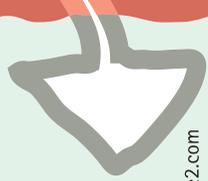
Did the originator of the well-known saying, "beauty lies in the eye of the beholder," mean the word "lies" to denote the cruel secrets that often lie behind cosmetically-adorned faces?

Behind the curtains of colour (make-up), sun-baked coats (body lotions) and divine essences (perfumes) there often lie untold animal suffering and the lost faith or wilful ignorance of God's self-proclaimed superior, favourite creatures – the human race.

The heartless cosmetic world cannot feel the pain of animals. It is deaf to their cries, but need consumers be insensitive too?

The everyday makeup kit consists of lipsticks, eye-shadow, *kajal*, moisturizer, talc, perfumes, etc. All of these may contain animal products and are barbarically tested on animals.

Items	Likely Animal Substances Used
After-shave	Lanolin(fat from sheep wool), Allantoin (uric acid from cows), Civet, Musk, Ambergris (from whale intestines), Castoreum, Squalene, Nakhla
Deodorants Et Perfumes	Civet, Musk, Ambergris, Castoreum, Squalene, Nakhla, Quaternium, Myristates, Urea, Beeswax/Bee Pollen, Cetyl Alcohol (Wax found in spermaceti from sperm whale/ dolphin), Glycerine
Eye Care (Eyeliner, Mascara, <i>Kajal</i>)	Hyaluronic Acid, Lactose, Glycerine, Lanoline, Quaternium, Stearic Acid, Beeswax, Silk Protein, Fish Scales, Pearl Ash
Face Packs Et Scrubs	Honey, Glycerine, Allantoin, Cetyl Alcohol
Foundations	Glycerine, Stearate, Lanolin, Polysorbate, Cetyl Acetate
Hair Care	Shellac/Lac, Keratin, Quaternium, Glycerine, Silk Protein, Cetyl Alcohol, Ceramides, Gelatine, Egg Protein, Collagen, Lanolin
Skin Care (Creams/Lotions)	Lecithin, Lanolin, Beeswax, Cetyl Alcohol, Fish Scales, Carmine, Allantoin, Tallow, Glycerine, Stearates, Emu Oil, Honey, Pearls, Elastin, Caviar, Testicular Tissue, Shark Liver Oil, Udder Extract
Soap	Tallow, Glycerine, Lanolin, Milk, Silk Oil, Honey, Myristates, Stearates
Lipstick	Beeswax, Lanolin, Lecithin, Honey, Fish Sclaes, Oleic Acid, Cetyl Alcohol
Nail Polish	Pearl Essence/Guanine, Silk Protein, Carmine
Talcum Powder	Shell Powder, Lecithin, Perfumes (Musk, Amergris, Castoreum, Nakhla, Squalene)
Mouthwash	Glycerine
Tooth Paste/Powder	Bone Ash, Glycerine, Dicalcium Phosphate, Gelatine, Charcoal



Courtesy: www.care2.com



Cosmetic industry researchers and scientists insist on animal testing to better understand cosmetics' possible adverse effects on humans.

Mascara, for example, is tested on rabbits. The rabbits' eyes are pulled open with forceps and mascara solution poured in. Since rabbit eyes don't have tear glands, the solution doesn't wash away. This helps researchers study the after-effects. The process is repeated until the researchers are sure there may be no negative reactions.



Shampoos boasting "no tears" are tested in the same manner. The animal is blinded, but its ordeal doesn't end there. It can still be useful in other testing procedures like dermal toxicity tests to test skin irritation due to creams and lotions.

Lipsticks and mouthwashes are force-fed to mice until many succumb. The knowledge gained is of no benefit to humans, it being unlikely that humans would consume lipstick in such high doses as to get poisoned or die.

Do you know, or want to know, that this is your cosmetic industry—making people beautiful at the cost of innocent creatures' lives? If you're beautiful, do you need these cosmetics? If you aren't, will they make you beautiful? Would the men who love you think you beautiful if they knew the secrets of your beauty?

There are alternatives to this injustice — vegetarian products. There are companies that manufacture products using vegetable/mineral materials which are not tested on animals.

These products are hard to find in the market but, if the consumer is aware of them and demand rises, supply will improve as well. As well, there are home-made recipes for most of our body-care needs.

Regulators for international manufacturers: The U.S. Cosmetics Review Panel regulates the use of chemicals in cosmetics, certifying that the chemicals are "safe/unsafe."

In Australia, the National Industrial Chemicals Notification Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) must be notified of all cosmetics that contain industrial chemicals new to Australia.

In the European Union, a Draft Chemicals Regulation was launched by the European Commission in October 2003 called REACH. It encodes the registration, evaluation and authorization of chemicals.

India is yet to formalize such measures. If manufacturers take

the initiative to establish such an agency or regulatory body, or request the government to do so, it would not only reduce animals' suffering from testing, but would also be more cost-efficient. The manufacturers will not have to test the same chemicals over and over.

By using products listed in the BWC Vegetarian Shopper's Guide sent as a pull-out in this issue of *Compassionate Friend* animal suffering can be alleviated.



Sanskriti Marathe is a research officer at Beauty Without Cruelty.

The BWC Team came up with the slogans below. They altered popular cosmetic advertising slogans to present the animals' viewpoint:

Fiama Di Wills

Beautiful you today, tomorrow
Ugly me, today and forever

L'Oreal

Because you are worth it.
Is it worth it?

Mabelline

May be she is born with it, may be its
Mabelline
May be animals were killed for it

Garnier

Take care
Take care of the ugliness behind
testing

Pantene

Shine Pantene
Shine with crime

Revlon

Feel like a woman
Feel like a cruella

Pears

Pure and gentle
Pure and gentle on you, but tainted
and harsh on animals

Oil of Olay

Pamper yourself
Pamper yourself by tampering animals'
skin

Rabbit Farming is Profitable— but For Whom?

By Karuna

Ever wondered how that piece of meat hopped onto a plate?

Rabbits may be making their way to innumerable dining tables.

BWC started investigating rabbit farming in Pune on reading a *Times of India* article, "Rabbit farming is no magic," in which one Mr. Omprakash said: "Many people with money and a bit of property are led into thinking that rabbit farming can be carried out with ease. We want to make clear that there is no such thing as earning lakhs in this activity. It cannot be done as home business, nor is it a cottage industry which can yield good returns. And this is especially so in low lying areas like Pune and elsewhere in Maharashtra."

The All India Rabbit Farming Institute, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Vijaylaxmi Hi-Tech Farms and Alfatech Associates are a few of the institutes catering to the rabbit-meat industry.

On visiting the All India Rabbit Farming Institute (AIRFI), we found it was started by Omprakash in January 2008. It is involved in training people to breed rabbits. Talking to BWC, Omprakash made statements contradicting

his words in the article, in order to present rabbit farming as a lucrative business.

Projected rabbit profits need objective verification.

We visited the AIRFI website. Reading it, we found different categories of people being targeted to invest in this business: a special concession was offered ladies; the institute offered investment schemes for students whereby they would pay Rs.5,000 to get a return of Rs.15,000 in a year.

Housewives apparently pay Rs.500 initially for training. AIRFI returns this amount to them when they start their business. Later, to buy a unit of rabbits they must pay Rs.12,500. This is a special scheme, since the AIRFI normally charges Rs.18,000.

Omprakash further explained that, under this plan, a businessperson gets five male and five female rabbits. The rabbits mate every 45 days, giving birth to 15-20 babies, of which six to eight may be expected to survive. After three months, AIRFI buys the rabbits from the breeders at Rs.200 per kg.

We observed that the rabbits were kept on an open terrace to run around in sweltering heat, a parody of the free-range system, at the AIRFI. There were about 30 rabbits there. Each had a look on its face that told us how they wished they could escape the sun's scorching heat. Little did they know that the heat was just the beginning of their misery, eventually to end at the hands of a ruthless human.

A tattered sheet of plastic provided the rabbits some shade. A washing area on the terrace was leaking, and the dirty water collected near the rabbits.

A big bag of cauliflower leaves was left open for the rabbits. These leaves were scattered all over the floor. Hygiene was obviously not a breeders' priority. The breeders may not be overly concerned about the creatures, though they hope to profit off them, since we heard that some rabbits are even killed by cats.

On our second visit to AIRFI, we noticed that the rabbits had been moved to a large room. The room was dark, and had few ventilation outlets. We were appalled at the rabbits' condition.

There were five or six rabbits crammed into each cage. The cages were so small, they could barely walk in them. The cages should, ideally, be kept at a height. Three long bamboo poles supported six gas cylinders, on which the cages rested. It was a rickety set-up. The slightest quarrel among the rabbits could land the cages on the floor.

Rabbit droppings fell to the floor, which was soaked with their urine. The room was reeking. We imagined what the rabbits go through.



Balanced precariously on death row.

Noticing a rabbit kept separate in a basket, we asked why he was there. We were told that he was sick. Apparently they saw no need to call a vet, only giving the sick rabbit some water. All the rabbits were in a deplorable state. This brought home to us that there was no concern for the rabbits' health or hygiene.

AIRFI claims:

- Their rabbits come from Vishakhapatnam
- They are used for breeding which, in turn, is for their meat and fur.
- Women may earn up to Rs.50,000 to Rs.75,000 per month as breeders.
- The rabbits do not require much medical attention.
- The cost of their maintenance is negligible.
- They buy the rabbits from their clients at Rs.200 per kg.
- This business does not require a license.

A few days later, we visited Vijaylaxmi Hi-Tech Farms in Satara District, Maharashtra, where rabbit breeding is popular.

There we met one Mr. Premanand Kawale. The farm started in December 2008 and has a presence in several districts of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Prior to its establishment, the villagers resented rabbit farming because numerous villagers had been cheated by similar institutes. The institutes promised the villagers they would buy the rabbits from them, but never did.

Number of kits	Weight (Kgs.)	Weight after 6 weeks	Weight after 73 weeks
Local White 7	49	932	1809
White Giant 6	55	1085	2537
Great Giant 6	58	1100	2312
Soviet Chinchilla 7	68	1157	2275

Rabbit farming has been touted by many in these areas as an easy, money-making business.

Vijaylaxmi Hi-tech Farms informed us about rabbit breeds and their uses.

The following breeds are used for meat:

New Zealand White, White Giant, Gray Giant and Soviet Chinchilla.

The following breeds are used for wool:

Angora, German Angora, Russian Angora and British Angora.

Vijaylaxmi Hi-tech Farms claims that one may export rabbit meat to European countries because of India's consumer-friendly export policies. This will increase the consumption of rabbit meat and hike demand.

VHF also maintains that:

- Rabbits are sturdy animals who do not require as much care as poultry
- A chicken needs to be fed 20-21kgs to increase its weight by 1 kg, whereas a rabbit requires only 3kgs of feed to achieve the same weight increase.

- Seventy to 75% of rabbits' food expenditure may be covered by vegetable waste, which can be obtained from the markets.
- One may earn Rs.5,000 or more per month after six months.
- The rabbits may be sold at Rs. 80 per kg., as the demand for rabbit meat and fur is high.

VHF is trying to entice people into this business by exaggerating its benefits and profitability, and by claiming that it will cater to European demand.

Not only are these institutes abusing the rights of these beautiful, innocent creatures but also, fly-by-night con-men are taking advantage of the villagers' simplicity. These creations of nature are but so many kilograms of meat to their breeders. They are considered mere commodities.

In the Chinese calendar the rabbit, ironically, represents people's hopes. Newborns are given paintings of rabbits so that they may lead peaceful, happy lives.

But can peaceful, happy lives be attained via these rabbits' slaughter?



Cobras "Worshipped" on Annual 'Nag Panchmi

By Vithal Naukudkar

Considered divine in Hindu mythology, cobras are worshipped as a safeguard against ill-fortune. People from all over the land come to Battis Shirala Village on *Nag Panchmi* because the Hindu festival is celebrated there on a large scale.

The villagers arose early on the festive day, decorating their verandahs with *rangoli* and other items. At about 7:00 a.m., those who had snakes walked into the temples. The routine is to show the snakes to people during a procession, but there was only one snake to be seen this time. People seemed upset at this.

Groups of locals called *Nagraaj Mandals* catch the snakes prior to the event and keep them till the auspicious day, when they take the snakes to the temple in earthen pots. The pots' mouths are sealed by cotton cloth covers.

The *Nagraaj Mandals* settle down in an open space near the temple. They open the pots and tilt them, allowing the snakes and slither out. One person standing behind holds the snake by its tail, while another holds the pot in front of it to distract the snake. If the snake

is not focused on the pot, a stick is waved in front of it to draw its attention. Snake charmers make the snakes spread their hoods.

Devotees then anoint the snakes with *haldi, kum kum and gular*. All this gets into the hapless snakes' eyes, and is painful.

The snakes are then returned to their individual pots, which are re-sealed with cotton cloths. The reptiles are taken from house to house to perform later, and released the next day.

BWC education officer Amruta Ubale spoke to Ajit Patil of *Sarpa Mitra* (Friends of Snakes). He informed us that catching snakes and making them perform on *Nag Panchmi*, or any other occasion,

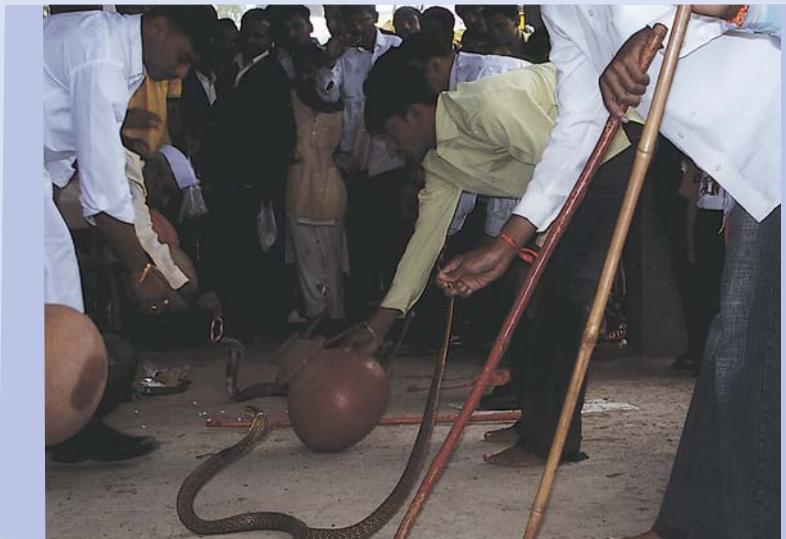
is illegal. Along with a few other *Sarpa Mitras*, Patil had drawn the authorities' attention to the matter, but the latter didn't bother about it, so the locals continued with their acts of cruelty.

He assured us, however, that the snakes weren't de-fanged, nor were their mouths stitched, but they were kept in plastic jars most of the time, which was a traumatic experience for them.

A policeman's lot is not a happy one, but neither is that of society when illegal acts like these are conducted openly on a large scale—in the presence of police, and forest officials as well.



Vithal Naukudkar is a field officer at Beauty Without Cruelty



"Live" Dinner Shows at Gir Sanctuary

By Khurshid Bhathena

At the Gir Sanctuary in Gujarat, buffalo calves were again used as live bait to attract lions for tourists although the practice was, we believe, stopped for some years.

In 2000, Beauty Without Cruelty came to know that a lion census was planned at the Gir National Park and that live bait (calves) would be used. Despite the Gujarat chief minister's office assuring us that live bait would not be used, we received a reply to the contrary from a State Forest Department official who justified the use of live bait on the grounds that they were "only" going to use male buffalo calves which are "uneconomical" and "useless" and which are not allowed to survive at dairies.

However, the census was cancelled due to heavy rainfall.

BWC has consistently objected to the use of live bait and, in April 2008, Shri Narendra Modi, the chief minister of Gujarat, was again approached because we felt the Forest Department was hand-in-glove with the villagers/farmers who supply and tie down calves and buffaloes as live bait for Gir lions to attract tourists and also cheat the State Government by claiming compensation for their "lost" or killed cattle.

"Lion Shows" as they are called, are gruesome: a buffalo/cow calf is tied to one end of a long rope, while the other end is attached to a tractor. As soon as at least one lion approaches the calf, the tractor drives down the hillock (where the tractor and calf wait), dragging the animal.

This makes the lion chase the calf, along with other lions. The rope is then cut and the lions attack, kill and eat the poor traumatised calf while tourists watch. No photography is allowed – we know the reason is not because it disturbs the lions, as stated by those responsible.

BWC's complaint to the chief minister led to the Gujarat State Government promptly investigating the matter, as a result of which the Forest Department claimed that the shows with live bait were outside the protected areas! So BWC again wrote to the chief minister, and others, pointing out that whether the live bait is inside or outside the sanctuary limits is impertinent because the fact remains that the practice is illegal, and the Forest Department of Gujarat State is accountable.

The end result was that the State's forest minister declared that two forest officials had been asked to keep a vigil on the activities. BWC has not to date heard of any more such "live" dinner shows.

A ban on the use of live bait was one of several suggestions given by BWC to the Government of India when the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

was amended in 1982. However, despite this legislation against the use of live bait, BWC found that none other than the Government of India (including a few Defence units) uses live bait as bait for carnivorous animals. On several such occasions, strong protests were lodged by BWC, resulting in an assurance given (a few signed by Union ministers) that the practice would be discontinued.

Nevertheless, some wild life authorities have cunningly devised a special trap for the purpose: in one compartment the live bait – usually a dog – is kept; another compartment traps the big cat – usually a leopard. Although the dog cannot be physically harmed by the leopard, it is subjected to night-long, unimaginable terror.

BWC has recommended to the Government of India that, if and when it becomes necessary to trap a leopard because it has become a "nuisance," the remains of the animal it last killed be used as bait (never a live animal such as a calf, dog, goat or hen) as leopards, unable to finish eating their prey in one sitting, invariably return to the same place the next day, to continue feeding.

It was also pointed out that the leopards and hyenas thought to be the cause of missing or mauled children were later found innocent. Some psychotic humans were involved in these crimes.



Khurshid Bhathena is honorary secretary of Beauty Without Cruelty.

Obituaries

By Diana Ratnagar

Beauty Without Cruelty lost two dear friends and supporters last August:

Dr. Meherwan M. Bhamgara

Nalini Mehta, BWC's vice-president at the time, and I were at the 1977 World Vegetarian Congress in New Delhi. We met Dr. M.M. Bhamgara there. He became a life member of our organization, and his long, fruitful association with BWC spanned three decades.

Dr. Bhamgara was a famous naturopath. He helped propagate our case for animals and vegetarianism by referring to our work in his numerous lectures and publications. These were in Gujarati and English. He was good at both languages, and spoke on varied subjects. Not only did he advocate a healthy vegetarian diet, but also he lamented the presence of children in slaughterhouses, seeing animals being killed. They were also being exposed to intensive farming techniques for poultry and other animals, such as rabbits. These are known to have a dehumanizing effect.

When a large number of BWC members expressed their desire for a Gujarati version of *Compassionate Friend*, Dr. Bhamgara came to our rescue as editor of our *Satvanukampa* magazine. Due to economic reasons, we had to suspend its publication after a few years.

His last advice to BWC was to publish frequent issues of our magazine, which we hope to accomplish.

Dr. Bhamgara practiced exactly what he preached as a naturopath. That is why he survived for decades even after being diagnosed with cancer.

Mohan Hari

Fifty-year-old Mohan Hari was run over by a bus while crossing a New Delhi road one night.

While a student at the Film & Television Institute of India in Pune during the late '70s, Mr. Hari approached Beauty Without Cruelty offering to make a film for us. His low budget caused us to pounce on the idea, and he began shooting almost immediately, with his associates. I recall seeing them off in a second-class train compartment on their first journey out of Pune in connection with this assignment.

This was followed by numerous trips all over the country. Some of our members may recall that our 20-minute film, "Beauty Without Cruelty," eventually cost much more than expected, and it was delayed for years because we didn't want to torture or kill a single animal to hasten its completion.

Mr. Hari, along with Deepak Roy and the film crew, got accustomed to endless waiting in various corners of the country, and to returning empty-handed. We could trust him not to inflict pain on any creature to get some good shots.

Consequently, we were proud to state that the suffering and deaths of creatures seen in our film would have occurred regardless of the filming. In contrast, certain films have been made by other organizations, for which animals were specially killed for the filming.

Since 1985, the film made by Mohan has been screened about once a week and has been appreciated every time. It is still relevant, and viewers' reactions remain the same. It must have converted many to vegetarianism and conscious consumption--and will convert more in the years to come.

Thank you, Mohan.

Diana Ratnagar is chairperson of Beauty Without Cruelty.

Phonetic Alphabet for Animal Activists

Developed by
Beauty Without Cruelty



- A Animal
- B Bird
- C Cow
- D Dog
- E Elephant
- F Fox
- G Goat
- H Horse
- I Insect
- J Jaguar
- K Kangaroo
- L Lion
- M Monkey
- N Nightingale
- O Ox
- P Parrot
- Q Queen bee
- R Rabbit
- S Sheep
- T Tiger
- U Unicorn
- V Vulture
- W Whale
- X X-Rayfish
- Y Yak
- Z Zebra

The Disappointed Pigeon

By Shantanu Subramaniam

One by one, new twigs begin to appear on the little balcony of our rented room. Two pigeons bring them from far and near, laying them on the porch. Later, an egg appears—pure, white, with life hidden in it, awaiting nurture and care until it is mature enough. Its poor parents had to lay their egg in a space that earlier belonged to it, but was now rented out to man.

I imagine what may have been on the spot before the building was constructed. Trees perhaps, where their ancestors had been born. Another couple of days pass, and the couple begin frequenting their new home. One of them is almost always beside the delicate, white egg. And a second one...another little egg. Now the mother is always beside her eggs.

Until one day, when someone decided to throw the eggs away. The pigeon flew away, cursing man! The eggs were brought back though, and are waiting to hatch.



The Liberated Squirrels

By S. Balasubramani

It was a sunny afternoon. I was coming home to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Campus Rayanpalayam, a small village in the Union Territory of Puducherry, when I saw two boys, about 10 to 12 years old. I thought they may be vacationing there but, until I, noticed their box-traps. These are normally used to catch rats. I was dismayed to observe that they had caught some squirrels.

I asked them what they were going to do with the squirrels. Incredulous when they replied, "We will eat them," I confiscated their traps.

They belonged to a small village in Tamilnadu's Tiruvarur District. They promised not to trap squirrels again, but wanted their traps back. One of the boys burst into tears, saying his father would beat him severely for returning without the traps.

I understood their position. They had apparently dropped out of Class V under parental pressure. I spoke to them about the ecological importance of animals. A few neighbours appeared but, knowing my interest in animal welfare, they left in silence.

The boys ran away suddenly, leaving me standing there with the traps. After about two hours, one of them returned with an old man, probably his father. They requested me to return their traps. I replied that, if they wanted them, they must report to the nearest police station or child help line for their undesirable activities. Realizing his position, the old man left without argument.



I was happy to have saved a few squirrels' lives.

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Beauty Without Cruelty – India

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie, Pune 411 040.

Tel: 0(20) 2686 1166; Fax: 0(20) 2686 1420.

E-mail: admin@bwcindia.org; website: www.bwcindia.org

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