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COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

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

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HC order Donkeys

Crackdown on Manja



Poaching Pangolins



Beauty Without Cruelty - India

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie, Pune 411 040

+91 74101 26541

admin@bwcindia.org bwcindia.org

Spring 2025

From my Desk...

New Zealand to end Greyhound Racing

In December 2024, BWC was delighted to know that the New Zealand government after years of effort to reduce harm to racing dogs and the rate of injuries and fatalities among them, decided to ban greyhound racing in 20 months, starting 2026. First legislation to prevent killing would be passed and about 2,900 existing racing dogs would be re-homed properly.

Meanwhile, BWC has written to Rt Hon Winston Peters, Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister and Racing Minister of the New Zealand, requesting him to please ensure that none of the greyhounds are exported to India or any other country, especially Australia where racing is an established sport (with 58 operational tracks, it tops greyhound abuse worldwide) and a big gambling activity. Our request was forwarded to the Hon Winston Hoggard, the Associate Minister in charge of Animal Welfare who sent it back to the office of the Minister of Racing.

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Greyhound Races Cancelled



Closer home, in December 2024, PeTA and BWC successfully approached the Deputy Commissioner, Mansa, Punjab, to take immediate action and withdraw permission given for greyhound races scheduled to be held illegally two days later.

Crackdown on Manja – better late than never

Ever since the ban on manufacture, sale, storage, purchase and use of *manja* was imposed by the National Green Tribunal in



Photo courtesy: instagram.com

2017, BWC had been urging the Police to aggressively take action against culprits. Had they done so, many birds, animals, and even humans, would not have been severely injured or bled to death for over seven years.

BWC was therefore pleased to know that in December 2024 the Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar (Aurangabad) Police filed FIRs against sellers and buyers of *manja* under Section 110 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita which states “attempt to commit culpable homicide” and results in imprisonment for 3 years, or a fine, or both. Moreover if it injures any person, then the term of imprisonment may increase up to 7 years, or a fine, or both; and is a non-bailable offence in Sessions Court.

Monkeys in Peril

In honour of the International Monkey Day on 14th December 2024, BWC sent an urgent appeal to the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to save monkeys from being mercilessly caught and confined, then transported and tortured just because they were no longer given protection under the Wild Life Act.

BWC stressed that they should be urgently protected against being killed for meat, captured as pets, trained for entertainment, used for experimentation and subjected to other forms of abuse.

Having shrunk their habitat and taken away their protection was proving to be disastrous for the species – and humans. We therefore requested that they be rehabilitated and again be given protection under the Wild Life Act.

 **Diana Ratnagar**
Chairperson

Gadhimai 2024

The number of buffalo sacrifices plummeted from 22,500 in 2019 to fewer than 7,000 in 2024, says Kamlesh Shah

Every five years, during November-December, hundreds of thousands of Hindus gather at the Gadhimai Temple in Nepal, near the Indian border, for a festival that has ignited both reverence and controversy. Known as “the world’s bloodiest festival”, it involves the mass slaughter of animals offered as sacrifices.

This event holds significant importance for many in India, with millions crossing the border to appease Gadhimai. During this time, hundreds of thousands of animals are illegally transported and brutally sacrificed.

The origins of this practice date back to Bhagwan Chowdhary, the founder of the Gadhimai Temple in Bariyarpur, Bara District. In a dream, the goddess Gadhimai promised Chowdhary power and prosperity in exchange of a blood sacrifice. Initially seeking human blood, Chowdhary ultimately offered animal blood instead.

In 2016, the Supreme Court of Nepal ordered the government to phase out animal sacrifices, but this ruling was largely ignored. Despite legal challenges from opponents, the horrific practice continued in 2019 and in 2024. The Nepal Government was also not keen to stop this superstitious and brutal practice which is condemned worldwide.

This time, the Akhil Bharat Krishi Go Seva Sangh (ABKGSS) and Shree Vardhman Parivar (SVP) aimed to significantly reduce the number of animals sacrificed compared to the previous event in 2019. The ABKGSS team developed a strategic plan to enhance their impact. The aim was to stop hundreds of



Buffalo calves are brought to the registration counter outside the slaughtering ground for obtaining receipt of payment from temple authority. Photo courtesy: Sneha's Care

thousands of animals from illegally crossing the Indo-Nepal border to be sacrificed at the Gadhimai Mela from 7th to 9th December 2024.

Considerable Success

Prior to venturing to mitigate sacrifice in another country, an extremely onerous task, the ABKGSS team conducted thorough research about this brutal event, uncovering that the Gadhimai sacrifice is rooted in superstition and myth. The senseless killing of countless animals to fulfil personal desires is unacceptable to any rational individual. No goddess can be appeased with the blood of innocent lives. The Nepalese government appeared to be motivated by the substantial economic benefits derived from this festival, which attracts millions of attendees.

Our research also investigated past sacrifice events, the Supreme Court’s ruling, and the efforts of animal rights NGOs in Nepal. This groundwork empowered ABKGSS and SVP to confront this massive sacrificial event.

The Gadhimai sacrifice exemplifies humanity's insatiable greed, exploiting superstition to fulfil unquenchable desires. Millions of people attend the festival, bringing countless animals for slaughter from all over India and from Nepal itself.

The slaughter began at 7 am on 8th December 2024. Nearly 6,500 male buffaloes were killed by 11:30 am. The beheading process was heartbreaking and cruel, conducted in a large area surrounded by 14-foot high walls where CCTV and photography were banned.

Devotees were seen with knives in their hands chasing buffalo calves. Goat sacrifices were scheduled for the next day on 9th December. Thousands of goats were killed in open fields. This gruesome spectacle seems more about profit than ritual or reverence, with the Nepalese government capitalising on the event's economic potential.

A glimmer of hope emerged thanks to the exemplary support from the Government of India, the vigilant efforts of the Sashastra Seema Bal, Bihar Police, animal activists and dedicated volunteers. Experienced teams were deployed along the entire Indo-Nepal border connected to Bihar's districts, including West Champaran, East Champaran (Motihari and Raxaul), Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Supaul and Kishanganj. Assertive volunteers maintained a presence at the borders for nearly 20 hours a day, creating a compelling environment that kept law enforcement agencies on high alert. The pressure from senior officials, fuelled by thousands of e-mails from around the world, further strengthened these efforts. Four NGOs actively worked at the border with the noble intention of saving animals from brutal killing — they intercepted vehicles attempting to smuggle animals for sacrifice — with the ABKGSS having the most significant presence.

The collective efforts of all involved produced remarkable results. The number of buffalo sacrifices plummeted from 22,500 in 2019 to fewer than 7,000 in 2024 — a marked decline that underscores our commitment to change. Although the exact number of goat sacrifices remains uncounted, it is clear that they too decreased substantially compared to previous events. This success is a testament to the unwavering support of generous donors, divinity forces, the divine blessings of heavenly Pujya Acharya Shri Muktidarshansuri ji, and the dedicated efforts of the ABKGSS and SVP teams. Together we made a profound impact.

Faces Behind the Success

We must extend our heartfelt gratitude to the unsung heroes who worked tirelessly behind the scenes; our success would not have been possible without their invaluable contributions. The remarkable achievements of our mission are largely



Huge numbers of male buffalo calves killed inside the huge ground surrounded by a 14-foot high wall for mass sacrifice on 8 December 2024. Photo courtesy: Unknown

due to the unwavering dedication of our young champions from the Shetrunjay Yuvak Mandal — Fenil, Keval and Harsh — along with their entire team. They ingeniously crafted an automated e-mail campaign that targeted 16 key authorities responsible for preventing the illegal export of animals across Indian borders.

The SVP team, along with the eloquent Shri Arpit Shah from Kolkata, Shri Saket Shah from Ahmedabad, and the Jainik Group, mobilised public support through compelling video messages. Their collective efforts culminated in an astounding 68,000 e-mails sent to these authorities from around the globe, generating powerful momentum that compelled government officials to take immediate action. Together, we have made a significant impact.

Our close associate and animal activist Advocate Raju Gupta played a pivotal role by visiting the SSB headquarters in New Delhi, where he met with the Director General and Inspector General of the SSB. He emphasised the importance of the Supreme Court's 2016 ruling in the case of Gauri Mulekhi vs. Union of India (WP 881/2014) and expressed his readiness to support the SSB in curbing the illegal flow of animals across the borders for sacrifice. The SSB responded positively, recognizing the urgency of the situation and committing to provide full support from both headquarters and local districts known for animal smuggling. This unwavering support from the SSB was instrumental in saving thousands of lives in 2024.

To combat the rampant illegal trafficking, the ABKGSS formed two specialized teams: One focused on Nepal and the other on the Indian border. Advocate Raju Gupta, and IPS aspirant Shri Ashish Barik travelled to Nepal on November 30, 2024, as part of Team A. They conducted extensive groundwork



Sneha Shrestha, founder of Sneha's Care Animal Welfare Organization, Nepal with a buffalo calf rescued from the Indo-Nepal Border. Photo courtesy: Sneha's Care

in Kathmandu, meeting with Supreme Court Advocate Shri Arjun Kumar Aryal, representatives from the Indian Embassy, and the Director General of the Armed Police Force (Nepal's border security agency). They conveyed the urgent need to end the sacrificial practices rooted in superstition and condemned worldwide.

Team A also visited the Gadhimai site, spending two additional days to observe the sacrificial rituals and identify opportunities for intervention. They collaborated with prominent animal welfare NGOs to devise a comprehensive plan to rescue and save animals destined for sacrifice. Their relentless efforts extended from Gadhimai to Patna (Bihar), where they engaged with volunteers stationed at the most vulnerable borders to prevent illegal smuggling.

The presence of Team B was a game changer. This dedicated team operated around the clock from 28th November to 10th December 2024, prioritizing the rescue of innocent lives over their own comfort. Under the guidance of experienced leaders like Advocate Shri Shashank, the spirited Ms Latha, zestful ground leader Ms Neha and her committed volunteers, they worked tirelessly in extreme challenging conditions, determined to save as many lives as possible.

Senior figures, including Sant Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Shri Shantilal Jain and Dr Kalyan Gangwal, played crucial roles in achieving success. The invaluable guidance of Ms Sneha Shrestha, founder of Sneha's Care Animal Welfare Organization, provided critical insights that proved to be a game changer for our successful operation.

Through the collective efforts of these passionate individuals and teams, we made significant strides in protecting innocent lives and challenging the status quo of animal sacrifice. Their commitment and resilience serve as an inspiring testament to the power of collective action in the face of cruelty.

We have learned a lot from this experience, and we are confident of stopping this cruellest of cruel practice by creating mass awareness amongst devotees who are misled and therefore innocent lives are brutally beheaded. To end this age-old mythical practice, we need support of Sant Samuday community, opinion makers, NGOs and Governments of Nepal and India.

Animals rescued by ABKGSS volunteers from the borders are being rehabilitated safely in *gaushalas* and were seen under armed police protection on 12th December 2024. Of the 336 animals rescued, custody of 305 was given and they were shifted to Bodhgaya Gaushala run by Rushabh Foundation and Vandevi Gaushala near Motihari, both in Bihar. The rest of the animals were rehabilitated by the SSB/ Police in other *gaushalas*. Actually, the team convinced many not to take animals across the border to Gadhimai since slaughtering was not real *Bali*.



Kamlesh Shah is a Trustee of Akhil Bharat Krishi Go Seva Sangh and Head of the Research Team at Shree Vardhman Parivar. He is also a BWC life member.

BWC's contribution

Our Trustee, Rajeev Sethi contacted Shri Bikesh Shrestha, Founder of the Federation of Animal Welfare Nepal, only to be told that this time the court had done nothing to prevent animal sacrifices. But, the Gadhimai temple authorities had requested people to donate money instead of sacrificing animals, so that they could build a bigger and better temple, therefore hoping the number of animals sacrificed would be reduced.

The solution and hope were to stop animals from crossing over. BWC had already written to India's Prime Minister, Home Minister, Sashstra Seema Bal, Chief Ministers and Director Generals of Police of Bihar, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, asking them to ensure that no animals cross the Indo-Nepal border.

And that's exactly what Shri Kamlesh Shah organised. BWC congratulates him and all others who helped in stopping the illegal movement of animals from India into Nepal. Although thousands of animals were beheaded, those that were saved were lucky – each and every life is an individual and matters.

Poaching Pangolins

An Indian intelligence report found that poachers had begun preferring pangolins to tigers says Khurshid Bhathena

The name Pangolin is derived from the Malay word *pengguling* which means something that rolls up, which is exactly what they do if threatened – their keratin scales act as armour. In Hindi they are known as *bajra keet* or *bajra kapta*.

World Pangolin Day is commemorated on the third Saturday of February. Pangolins are small, solitary and nocturnal mammals. These scaly anteaters are grouped with other anteaters, armadillos, and sloths. They have no teeth but a long sticky tongue that can consume up to 2 lakh (0.2 million) ants and termites per day. They have been around for some 40 million years, but are now losing their numbers to poachers and deforestation, especially in India and South Africa.

Wanted - Dead or Alive

An unimaginably high number of pangolins are killed – just for their scales and meat. Chinese medicine utilises ground-up scales as an aphrodisiac and as cures for liver disease and asthma. Additionally, pangolin meat and foetus soup are considered delicacies in China and Vietnam.

Although all eight species – two of which are endemic to India – of pangolins are given maximum protection under CITES Appendix I and their commercial trade is totally prohibited, they are the most poached and internationally trafficked animal.

An Indian intelligence report found that poachers had begun preferring pangolins to tigers. The crackdown on rhino horn had also resulted in a growing demand for pangolin



Thousands of pangolins are trapped and killed for their meat, bile, scales and claws.

scales used in traditional Chinese medicine. Both rhino horn and pangolin scales contain keratin. And, since pangolin scales contain a substance used to make psychotropic drugs they get linked to narcotics as well.

Pangolins are poached mainly by tribes for meat, bile, scales and claws utilised for so-called medical benefits, and for monetary gain. Saperas (the community of snake charmers) and Bawarias (tribe found mainly in North India) trap pangolins. Their burrows are smoked or flushed out with water. Pitfall traps are also used, as well as hunting with dogs. If caught alive, they are picked up and may be killed by being thrown into boiling water or clubbed to death.

When threatened pangolins coil their body into a tight ball (notwithstanding their scales protruding outwards like blades) which makes it easy for poachers to transfer and transport them in gunny bags. They have long claws and people think they will attack although they are not known to attack.



Cruelly and illegally obtained pangolin scales and amulets made from them (from top to bottom). Photos courtesy (this and facing page): Various from wikipedia.com

Live pangolins are sold as lucky charms by setting up a battery-operated device that shoots out sparks to convince buyers the pangolin is emitting an electric charge. The so-called lucky animal is not kept for long but continuously re-sold at a higher rate.

So-called Cures

Shikhar utsav is observed with pangolins being ritualistically hunted for meat in Odisha. In Odisha and West Bengal the flesh is believed to cure various diseases such as asthma, psoriasis and cancer; and since it is considered a “tonic” it is given to lactating mothers.

The Nattuvaidyars of South India claim the smoke from pangolin scales help in relieving piles; whereas, in Odisha the scales are fashioned into finger rings to cure piles. However, the majority of scales are smuggled to Nepal or Myanmar, with their final destination being China. Surprisingly, boots and coats are also made from the scales.

Origin and Seizures

The Walk Through India website lists the Indian Pangolin as one of the five most heavily trafficked animals in India. They say “the Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) or Thick-Tailed Pangolin is the most hunted animal in India and world’s most trafficked wild mammal. The highly endangered Indian Pangolin is about to become extinct. Almost 1 lakh (0.1 million) pangolins are captured every year in India for illegal trade.”

Pangolin scales periodically seized are accounted for in kilograms. Roughly 600 scales are found on one pangolin, the dry weight of which is no more than 450 grams. In Manipur pangolin scales weighing 3,248 kgs (representing over 7,000 pangolins) have been recovered and according to a 2020 Science Direct report this is 21% of all seizures.



Pangolin fetus is an unproven aphrodisiac.

Photo courtesy: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

In May 2022 during another pangolin seizure, the Special Task Force of Odisha declared that during the last two years 13 pangolins and 30 kgs of scales worth ₹ 6 crores (60 million) had been seized. The Forest Department even found out that pangolin scales were in great demand by foreign tourists during the Rath Yatra in Puri.

Traders use specific size ranges for pangolin scales and slang while buying and selling. The scales are declared as dried fish and therefore it's not at all easy to check each and every such consignment unless informed. No one can say how many consignments have escaped unnoticed.

The Indian Pangolin was radio-tagged by the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department in 2020 because the IUCN classified it as "endangered". The Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh Khawasa border seems to be the centre of this illicit trade in this region since it is well connected to the Nagpur territorial circle, Gondia and Bhandara districts as some traders are from Tumsar.

A pangolin captured in the Kolhapur forest was also brought to Pune in June 2019 – the two accused men hoped to sell it for ₹ 50 lakh. A month later two men were murdered in Tamhini Ghat (50 kms from Pune) after a financial dispute over

smuggling pangolins. This made the Police carefully look into all pangolin seizures made in Maharashtra and discover that multiple rackets were in existence. One group trapped the pangolins and sold them to another group of middlemen from cities who smuggled them further.

Chennai is a collection hub for pangolin scales from Madurai and even Karnataka. From Chennai they are taken to Berhampur in Odisha where consignments are added and forwarded to Tamu & Moreh in Manipur from where they are smuggled out by rail or road to Myanmar. Pangolin scales from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are moved to West Bengal, and then to the Moreh border. They are also smuggled via the Indo-Bhutan border.

Pangolins from Jammu, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttarakhand are also smuggled across the Indo-Nepal border and onward to China and Vietnam.

During the last 5 years, 199 pangolins were seized in India – not counting the live and dead pangolins and scales that were smuggled out of India undetected. The last two months of 2024 saw three poaching cases involving pangolins in Telangana and around the same time, two instances of pangolin poaching were found in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

Despite the laws meant to protect them, pangolins continue to face unimaginable cruelty and exploitation. Their scales, falsely prized for unproven remedies, and their meat, deemed a delicacy, have made them a target of global trade. Only through collective awareness and action can we hope to secure a future for these ancient, gentle creatures.



*Khurshid Bhathena is a Trustee
and Honorary Secretary BWC-India*

Interesting News

National Mission on Natural Farming

In November 2024 the Government of India approved the National Mission on Natural Farming. The government says natural farming is a chemical-free system rooted in Indian tradition and supported by a modern understanding of ecology, resource recycling and on-farm resource optimization. The system cuts dependency on purchased inputs and costs.

Natural farming processes include mixed cropping, managing diversity on farm through integration of trees, management of pests, through diversity and local on-farm made botanical concoctions (*neemastra*, *agniastra*, *neem ark*, *dashparni ark*, etc), integration of livestock, especially of native breeds of cow dung and cow urine as essential inputs, and water and moisture conservation.

The basic recipe used for making *Jeevamrutham*/*Jeevamrut* and *Beejamrutham*/*Beejamrut* natural farming fertilisers, considered superior to organic farming practices, are: 50 kgs *desi* cow dung, 40 litres *desi* cow urine, 10 kgs gram flour, 10 kgs jaggery, and 4 kgs mud taken from under a banyan tree.

Synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers, nor genetic modified organisms are used in natural farming. Farmers coat the seeds with materials like cow dung and ash (bio-stimulants), and necessarily plant a variety of crops in circles with minimal disturbance to the soil. Basically the soil is improved and thus productivity of diverse crops of different duration grown. It is therefore called ATM (Any Time Money) farming! And the productivity matches that of conventional farming.

Organic farming is basically chemical-free, whereas natural farming covers everything natural without external inputs with plants obtaining 98% nutrition from air, water and sun and the remaining percentage from the soil.

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) components include:

- *Beejamrutham*, or microbial coating of seeds using cow dung and urine-based formulations.
- *Jeevamrutham*, or the application of a concoction made with cow dung, cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, water and soil to multiply soil microbes.
- Mulching, or applying a layer of organic material to the soil surface to prevent water evaporation, and for soil humus formation.
- *Waaphasa*, or some aeration through a favourable microclimate.
- *Kashyams* for insect and pest management using decoctions made from cow dung, cow urine, lilac, and green chillies.

Forest Survey of India

Dense natural forests in regions like the Western Ghats and the Northeast have been diverted for non-forest purposes. In short, there is a major drop of 46,707 sq km in the country's dense natural forests, although over 2,400 sq km of forests have been added outside natural forest areas.

Deforestation results in climate change and biodiversity loss. Wild life suffers because without trees, birds, reptiles and insects lose their habitat. Small mammals are affected and in turn larger ones. The cascading effect eventually leads to starvation and species extinction.

Plastic Waste Management Rules violated

The Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) annual report 2024 on implementation of the Plastic Waste Management Rules (PWM) 2016 stated India's plastic waste generation had significantly risen in the last 5 years. Therefore, in October 2024, due to increasing complaints regarding violation of the PWM Rules, the CPCB issued stringent orders to State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB) and Pollution Control Committees (PCC) to enforce immediate action against offenders.

The violations included the use of plastic carry bags below the mandated thickness and unauthorised single-use plastic products. To prevent unauthorised use, enhanced surveillance was required by SPCBs and PCCs. Moreover, the government issued tender documents that should align with PWM specifications.

Plastic packaging is classified into 4 categories based on its composition and usage. The classifications stated below help in streamlining waste management and recycling processes under the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Category-I includes rigid plastic packaging.

Category-II covers flexible plastic packaging which can be single or multilayered, consisting of different types of plastic.

Category-III is defined as multilayer plastic packaging comprising of at least one plastic layer combined with another non-plastic material.

Category-IV includes plastic sheets used for packaging as well as carry bags made from compostable plastics.

In order to monitor banned carry bags of less than 120 microns thickness, the GOI has made it mandatory from 1 July 2025 onwards for every producer, importer or brand owner of plastic carry bags and multi-layered packaging to provide details via a QR code printed on it.

Artificial Reefs for Seafood



Artificial reef block. Photo courtesy: [thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com)

In 2023-24, scientists decided to provide artificial reefs to aid restoration around Chilika lake in Odisha, although the lake is not a natural coral reef area. After experimenting with different materials, they finally used a combination of cement, coarse and fine aggregates, and crushed sea shells collected from Puri beach. Unfortunately, the basic purpose of introducing this artificial reef was not to restore corals, but to help the fishing community with an increase in production of prawns, crabs, and fish.

In fact, since the 1990s, artificial reef experiments have been conducted in India. For example, artificial reef modules were deployed in at least 207 sites by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Central Marine Fisheries Institute (ICAR-CMFI) in Lakshadweep and Tuticorin. Moreover, artificial reefs have also been introduced in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Gujarat.

These and those implemented under the Union Government's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana are proposed by the

Department of Fisheries under the Kerala state Coastal Area Development Corporation are “restoration and adaptation measures, coastal aquaculture and mariculture with an integrated and multi-sectorial approach” under a new scheme Blue Economy 2.0 of the Union Budget 2024-25.

Seafood worth ₹ 61,044 crore was exported from India in 2023-24, compared to ₹ 45,663 crore in 2019-20, up nearly 31%. Imagine the number of lives involved – shocking beyond words.

In short, artificial reefs in a multi-billion dollar industry, with 70 countries having deployed 5,00,000 structures in 3,400 artificial reef and beach restoration projects along their coasts.

Protection of Donkeys

An animal activist had filed a PIL in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Amravati about donkeys being illegally slaughtered for meat in violation of several Acts, Regulations and Rules. In this connection, in August 2024 the Deputy Inspector General of Police submitted an affidavit to the HC in which it was stated that in November 2023 a circular had been issued to all Commissioners and Superintendents of Police to ensure strict compliance of laws, and cases should be registered against persons involved in illegal transport, killing and selling of donkey meat.



Confiscated donkey, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.

Photo courtesy: newsmeter.in

Law turned Turtle?



Tortoises at the rescue centre.

Photo courtesy: indiatimes.com

When in December 2024, the Maharashtra Forest Department rescued 478 turtles and tortoises that were temporarily housed at various locations and were part of an illegal trafficking and unlawful pet trade, BWC wondered how many hundreds had gone undetected. The surviving 443, mainly star tortoises that were rehabilitated, would be released into the wild.

No Horse Sense

An illegal and high-speed horse-cart race between Ghatkopar and Mulund on the Eastern Express Highway occurred early morning on 3 December 2024 sparking concerns of animal cruelty and public safety. A video titled “Mumbai Police *soti rahi*, horse riding *hoti rahi*”, showed bikers riding alongside filming and cheering the participants, went viral on social media after which a FIR was registered.



Screen-grab of the viral video showing horse-cart racing on the Eastern Express Highway, Mumbai.

Photo courtesy: Rajesh Gupta from mid-day.com

Vegan Recipe **Wheat**

Wheat/*gehun* is the most common cereal. It is a health building and energy giving food. Wheat flour or *atta* is used for *chappatis*. *Dalia/lapsi* is the shredded form of wheat, whereas *semolina/rava/sooji* is flour obtained by granulating wheat. These are very wholesome, but *maida* (wheat without bran, milled fine, refined & bleached) is not wholesome, worse if it is fried as in *pooris*, *luchi*, *kulcha*, etc. *Naan* is also made from *maida* (similar to all-purpose flour used elsewhere in the world). All-purpose flour is used in baking, for example – cakes, biscuits, etc.



Parsi Malido (serves 4)

Ingredients

- ½ cup fine semolina
- ¼ cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp black sesame/*til* oil
- ¼ cup water for kneading the flour
- 2 tbsps *charoli/chironji*
- 2 tbsps sliced almonds
- 2 tbsps golden raisins
- ¾ cup sugar and
- ½ cup water for sugar syrup
- ½ cup black sesame/*til* oil
(to fry the *malido* in)
- ½ tsp cardamom powder
- ½ tsp nutmeg powder
- 1 tsp vanilla essence

Preparation

Mix semolina, wheat flour, salt, oil and water. Knead, cover and set aside for 15 minutes. Knead again and make small thick *pooris*. Set aside.

Heat oil and stir fry *charoli*, almonds and raisins. Remove and set aside.

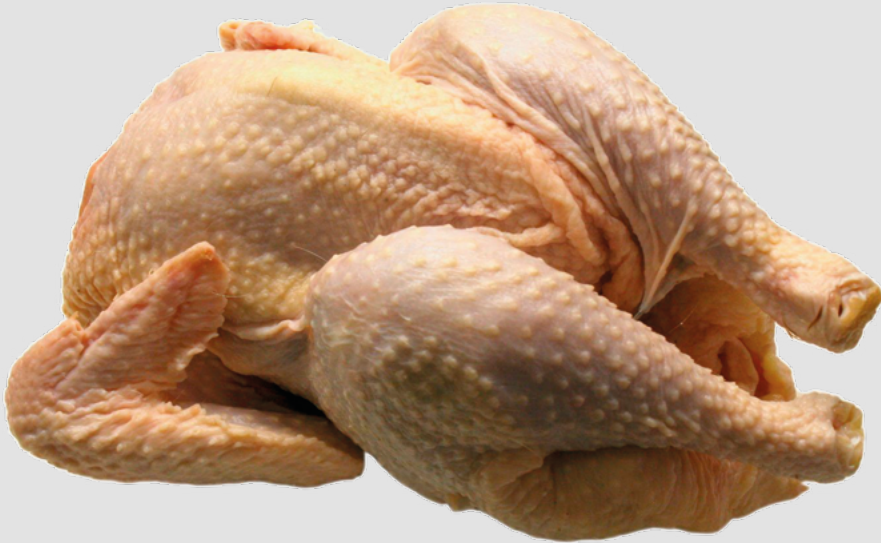
In the same oil, fry the *pooris* on a low flame until golden brown. Flip them a few times to ensure even cooking. Remove and let them cool, then grind to a coarse powder in a mixer.

In another pan, bring to boil water and sugar till it melts. Reduce heat and add the powdered *pooris*, stirring continuously until the mixture thickens. Add the left over oil a little at a time while stirring continuously. Add cardamom and nutmeg powders and vanilla essence and mix evenly.

Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with nuts and raisins. Let it rest for 3 to 4 hours before serving.

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

WHY DEATH?



**Meat is the decomposed carcass
of a living being who wanted to live.**

**Upon natural death or slaughter,
the body of a human or animal
immediately begins to decompose
so “fresh meat” is an oxymoron.**



Beauty Without Cruelty - India

4 Prince of Wales Drive, Wanowrie, Pune 411 040

☎ +91 74101 26541

✉ admin@bwcindia.org

🌐 bwcindia.org

