Message From Chairman

Making Gaushalas Milk Free & Neutering of Male Cattle / Scrub Bull by Humane Castration

My Dear Friends,

I suggest that you may be aware that India has the world’s largest population of cattle with 198 million cattle and this figure far exceeds the carrying capacity of the land and is not ecologically sustainable.

A significantly large percentage of cattle are poorly nourished, and in many cases, they are often denied even minimal levels of food, water and veterinary care and this is especially true for roaming cattle in the metros. The scene of hungry cattle eating plastic bags from garbage bins is a common sight in metros of the country. There is a lack of availability of sufficient food for the cattle population of the country. The deficits in dry fodder (40%), greens (30%) and concentrates (50%) is alarming. (See table sourced out from the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and Dairying).

Besides the acute scarcity of fodder, a scenario commonly witnessed in many metros is that the male baby calves are often deprived from drinking milk and are sold for slaughter. Such is the miserable condition of the cattle in our country. Once worshiped and revered as Gaumata, the same “sacred cow” has become a scavenger eating plastic bags from garbage bins and dying a slow and painful death. The film, “Plastic Cow” is one that must be viewed by all, as it points out more clearly than any other the hazards of improper disposal of garbage and the use of plastic bags for throwing garbage. The film is available for free download online.

According to the Annual Report published by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, the contribution of livestock and fisheries sectors to the total GDP of the agriculture sector during 2009-10 was 29.7%. In 2010-11, the revenue generated by the Government of India from the farm animal and fisheries sector was Rs.6,41,434 crores while from the farm animal sector alone, it was Rs 3,88,370 crores. This contribution from the farm animals and fisheries sector is as much as 28.4% to the total agricultural industry. Coming to the contribution of India’s cattle to milk production, it is higher than the paddy, wheat and sugar-cane produced in the country. The contribution of milk alone at Rs 2, 62, 214,51 crores was higher than paddy (Rs. 1,51,634 crores), wheat (Rs. 99,667 crores) and sugarcane (Rs 58, 470 crores) during 2010-11.

When I look at these figures, there is one thought that strikes me that there could be a solution to the nightmare of the ‘Hungry Plastic Cows’ quenching their hunger through plastic bags filled with garbage. As per the new law it is now mandatory that all companies will have to keep aside 2% of their revenues for CSR initiatives. A solution is possible if the Dairy Industry comes forward to promote the maintenance of new Gaushalas as part of their CSR initiatives. It will help to create new opportunities, modernized Gaushalas that can be partly self-sustaining institutions. Civic bodies like the Municipal Corporations with the support of the Animal Husbandry departments and the philanthropists in the community as well as the concerned citizens can also come forward to provide support to the setting up of these new ‘Gaumata Gaushalas’, where only stray, old, handicapped and unproductive cattle can be sustained.

There is a scarcity of good organic manure, organic pesticides and bio-gas. With the sale of organic manure and cow urine based pesticides, flooring and roofing material made from cow dung and electricity from biogas, a Gaushala can become a partly self-sustaining enterprise. Enterprise Gaushalas like the Kamrup Gaushala have developed an amazing range of products.

Towards Self–Sustainability of Gaushalas

By

Brig. S.S. Chohan, VSM (Retd), Member, AWBI

My Early Childhood Friends

The cow is a symbol of our heritage and culture. Since my childhood, I have considered the cow as “The Mother Divine”. During the golden years of our rich history, cows were considered to be the greatest wealth one could possess. In ancient Hindu texts it is mentioned that Lord Rama and Krishna both were born in Gaushalas which had thousands of cows. Besides religious scriptures, the cows, bullocks and calves have been my closest companions during the early years of my life. Having developed a deep bond of love and affection for them, I had learnt to communicate with them. Hence I consider it as a unique opportunity and a true gift to be able to share this love with them. The Manager of Nagar Nigam Gaushalas – Carterpuri and Chaura, Gurgaon, Haryana where I can do my bit in the service of these innocent, lovable and voiceless creatures of God.

About the Gaushalas

The Gaushalas were established as PPP (Public Private Partnership) projects with Vidhun Charitable Trust, an NGO devoted to the cause of stray cattle, as one partner and Municipal Corporation, Gurgaon as the other partner. The day-to-day management of the Gaushalas is handled by Vidhun Charitable Trust. The Gaushalas currently house about 1500 stray cattle. The purpose of setting up the Gaushalas was to rescue, protect, shelter, feed, treat, care for, and rehabilitate the suffering stray cattle that are weak, old, neglected, sick, injured, wounded, tortured and abandoned by their heartless owners on the roads and streets of Gurgaon city once they stop giving milk. These cows are forced to feed themselves on garbage dumps. As a result, the cows swallow plastic – a non biodegradable material that is injurious to their health and well-being. They also consume other rotten stuff on the roads by people which eventually leads to diseases, suffering and a painful, miserable, and untimely death.

Condition of Cows on arrival in the Gaushalas

Most of the cows brought to the Gaushalas are in a pathetic state. They are very weak, sick, distraught, disoriented, distressed, traumatized and often badly wounded due to accidents on the roads. Many have their limbs fractured and several cows are brought in with spinal injuries. Some are full of worms while others are brought in, profusely bleeding. Some of the cows that are brought to the Gaushalas have either their ears or tails missing! Many calves were orphaned whose mothers have died prematurely. During the post-mortem of most cattle, I have seen about 40 to 50 kgs of plastic, apart from death caused by nails, glass pieces, blades, chips, packets of detergent powder, satchets and even baby shoes in their rumen. Earlier, there were many deaths but now due to good care and God’s grace, the death rate has come to zero.

Welfare of the Cows in the Gaushalas

- The hospital is functional 24x7 with dedicated Veterinary staff who accept and treat casualties round the clock besides treating the cows brought by MCG (Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon) vehicles. Besides the Gaushala ambulance, purchase of another ambulance from the Nikki NGO called Gau Seva Trust also helps us to collect sick and injured cattle. Once the cows are brought to the Gaushalas, we take care to give them a nutritious diet that is well-balanced in fat, fiber, protein and minerals. In addition, we also get about 30 quints of fresh fruits from the volunteers of the volunteers who take care of them at the Gaushalas. However, the diet and treatment are also supported by the love of our employees and visitors who come to the Gaushala. The cows have to be brought out of the trauma they have gone through before coming to the Gaushala. Love acts as a balm on their emotional wounds. In the course of time these cattle, having regained health and happiness, become vibrant and lively. This transition is no less than a miracle.

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Board Issues Advisory Prohibiting Establishment of Dolphinariums in India

The Advisory issued by Maj Gen (Retd) Dr. R. M. Kharch, AVSM, Honble Chairman, AWBI, on January 7th 2013 and sent to the Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries (Dept of Fisheries) and the Chief Wildlife Wardens of all states and union territories across India came to the notice of the Board that there are a number of proposals in different states for the setting up of dolphinariums. These may involve the display of cetaceans (collective name for whales, dolphins and porpoises) as well as performances by these animals. Typically, this would involve the import of species such as Bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) as well as others. Such facilities have been known by different names including but not limited to Dolphinarium, Oceanarium, Dolphin Park, theme park etc hereinafter collectively referred to as Dolphinariums.

The AWBI strongly opposes proposals to build dolphinariums, and advises you to take appropriate actions to ensure that such facilities are not established in your state / UT. In this context, the following is relevant and may be noted:

- Performance Certificate: In exercise of the power conferred by Section 38 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, the Central Government has framed the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001 with amendments from time to time. All animals that are used or are used for the purpose of entertainment have to be registered with the AWBI under the said rules, being the prescribed authority for the purpose. The AWBI certificate has to be pre facto and cannot be post facto; hence the permission must be sought before the training and performance. All animals that are registered must be trained subject to conditions of registration laid down under the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001. It is pertinent to note that the AWBI does not allow to perform any cetaceans that are taken a decision not to issue performance certificates to cetaceans in the future – hence any attempt to import these animals for the purpose of display and performance would be in violation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and the rules framed under it.


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The Great Indian Dog Show! Celebrating the Great Indian Spirit of Loving Kindness

Chennai: As part of Animal Welfare Fortnight celebrations, Blue Cross of India’s Great Indian Dog Show held on Jan 20th 2013 at the C P Ramaswamy Aiyar Foundation at Alwarpet drew an amazing response. Maj Gen (Retd) Dr. R. M. Kharch, AVSM, Honble Chairman, AWBI was the Chief Guest for the event. The event was flagged off by MP and Founder, People for Animals, Smt Malti Kharch, whose love and support for Blue Cross of India’s efforts in popularizing the adoption of Indian streets dogs, also spoke about how Indian dogs have always been loved by the people of ancient India. She said, “Indian dogs have always been cherished by everyone – from Mughal Kings to Rajput princes. These events should be held in every city, and in every district. It’s time to give the Great Indian dog his rightful place in the great Indian society.” Speaking about Indian breeds of dogs she said, “there used to be 28 pedigrees in India that were once prized by Rajput rulers and Mughal royalty.” In fact, the term ‘pi’ (stray dog) takes its origin from the Tamil word ‘parayar’ (drummer) as the dogs would play the drum of the temples.”

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The Animal Welfare Board of India is an umbrella of the SPCAs / AWIBs and animal welfare societies. The Board enforces animal welfare activities, advises the Central and State Governments relating to Animal Welfare, particularly, the prevention of cruelty to animals, and formulates animal welfare policies / legislations.
If KVIC and state run agro-marketing organizations also come forward to purchase Gaushalas, such humane Gaushalas can be set up easily.

Although the Board is providing a fair amount of funds to many Gaushalas in the country, yet many of the Gaushalas are functioning without the welfare of cows being given priority. Instances of rearing cows for milk production, separation of the male calves from lactating cattle and male calves for slaughter are coming to our notice from some Gaushalas as is the case in the unholy and commercially run calving rooms of the maternity of our country. I would like to caution all Animal Welfare Organizations that are receiving grants from the Board that no grants will be released to those Gaushalas which are following the above producing practices.

Besides the Board also directs all Gaushalas to start the humane castration of male calves in Gaushalas to prevent the increasing population of cows in the country. I would like to inform that the Gaushalas which are not following the above practicing policies will not receive grants from the Board. The Board has also ordered the Government to make the Government Gaushalas follow the above policies.
In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (b) of sub-section (2) of Section 38 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (59 of 1960); the Central Government has made the Transport of Animals Rules, 1978. Capture and transport are invariably stressful and dangerous for cetaceans. Physiological indications of stress associated with capture and captivity include elevated adrenocortical hormones and impaired cell function. It has also been found that mortality rates of captured bottlenose dolphins shot up six-fold immediately after capture and levels of adrenocortical hormones do not drop down to ‘normal’ levels for up to 35-45 days. As such, the capture and transport of dolphins are in violation of the above mentioned rules and not to be permitted.

Housing: Section 27(A) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 defines the term ‘circuit’ as an establishment – either stationary or mobile – where animals are kept or used wholly or mainly for the purpose of performing tricks and manoeuvres. Section 2 (39) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, includes inter alia “circuit: within the definition of the word “zoo”. Section 38(1) of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 declares that no zoos – including circuses, as per Section 2(39) – shall be operated without being recognized by the Central Zoo Authority. Where these provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 are read and interpreted together, it is clear that zoos are meant to be operated within the definition of a circus, as defined in Section 2(7A) of the act. Hence, such facilities would be covered by the definition of zoos.

The Central Government of India in its Gazette of India dated 29th October, 1998 published the National Zoo Policy inter alia the main objectives of which are:

- Zoos should complement national efforts for conservation of wild fauna through creating an awareness of endangered species.
- To inspire children and adults to respect for wild animals and their environment.
- To provide opportunities for scientific studies and creation of database on biology of endangered species.

The Rule 10 (1) of the Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992 strictly mandates that the primary objective of operating any zoo shall be the conservation of the wildlife and no zoo shall take up any activity that is inconsistent with the said objective. That Rule 10 (1) of the Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992 states that all animal enclosures in a zoo shall be so designed as to meet the full biological requirements of the animals housed therein. That Rule 10(17) of the Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992 further stipulates that the zoo shall operate to maintain the natural habitat of the animals in the enclosure.

To the best of our knowledge, there are no studies documenting that exposure to, or interaction with captive cetaceans increases the public’s knowledge or concern about dolphins and the environment. The most in-depth survey conducted by the public display industry and published as a white paper was criticized under embargo and no final results (Marino et al, 2010). In fact, there is reason to believe that captive cetacean attraction actually miseducate the public about wildlife and the marine environment. Not only does the public not learn much, if anything about the life of cetaceans, but they are led to believe that the tricks they see are how cetaceans truly behave in the wild and that the cetaceans are pets and have value in the context of their relationship to humans.

Exposure to loud sounds – airborne and underwater – can also stress cetaceans. The sensitive hearing of cetaceans is well established and numerous studies, many on-going, are documenting the harmful effects that anthropogenic noise can have on them. Sound travels well through water and even airborne (e.g. aircraft, music) sounds can penetrate the air-water interface and be heard by captive animals. When certain sounds cannot be removed from their environment, then mental, physiological stress and damage can result.

In our opinion, no cetaceans can be housed in captivity in compliance with the objectives of the National Zoo Policy and the Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992. In view of the above, the AWBI, by virtue of the power vested in it by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and Rules framed under it, advises all concerned to issue appropriate directives prohibiting the establishment of such facilities, and further advises all Chief Wildlife Wardens of States to withhold permission to any person/ persons, organization, government agency, or private enterprise that proposes to import or capture any Cetacean species for training, to use as a performing animal for commercial entertainment, private or public exhibition, private or public human interaction, educational or research purposes.

Bangladeshis 'Walk the Talk' for Animals

In Bengaluru, a walkathon, jointly organized by Angels for ABC, Radio Active CR 96.4FM, Samaran Foundation, ANIBIN, Precious Paws Foundation, Sarvodaya Sevaabhi Samitha, BBMP, CUPA, Jain University, People for Animals, Stav Pals, The Golden Horse, VSAWRD, Pedigree and Wooficallicious was organized on January 20th 2013 from 8:00 to 9:30 am. Speaking at the flag off, Shri R Chemraj Jain, President Jain University Trust said that “Community outreach activities like these are very important to sensitize the general public on a variety of issues – ranging from cruelty to abandonment of pets. Community involvement is the only way forward in promoting animal welfare.” The group walked from Mayo Hall Triangle to Cubbon Park, carrying placards that addressed various aspects of animal welfare like: “Say No to Plastic Bags, Step Animal Cruelty, Prevent Animal Abuse, Support Humane Education programmes and Promote Responsible Pet Ownership.”

Meetaal Mulkerje, an animal welfare activist who participated in the event said, “My family and I participated in this event, as we strongly believe that animals play an important role in building stronger ties within the family and foster a sense of compassion to the natural population around us.” Vijaya Sitaram said, “The human race is getting more and more self-absorbed and seems to have forgotten that we share this planet with other sentient beings. They are on this earth for a purpose – and that purpose is not to be mercilessly used, abused and exploited to serve human whims”. Co-convener of the event, Poornima Harish while appealing the people for better participation from the community said, “Animals suffer in silence. They cannot help themselves. It is our responsibility to help them”.

Communities Concerned About 'Plastic Cow'

The screening of the 'Plastic Cow Film' is drawing concern from the community. Till date, three screening events of the film have been conducted in Bengaluru. The first event organized by Niinapara Sarmistya, Communications Consultant and Volunteer for the Plastic Cow Project was conducted at Ashirvaad Education Centre on January 12. The screening of the film was followed by a Panel discussion that included, HC, Animal Justice, Engineer from Future, (Kathryn) Cheramji from CIVIC, Leel Saldana from Environment Support Group, Wilma Rodrigues from Sathas and Clementine Pais from Karuna Society for Animals and Nature. Over sixty people attended the event and included, Bishnuda Nardakumar, Honorary President, WRC, Suparna Ganguly, Honorary President, CUPA, Dr Parvej A.Fizar, Jr Director, Dept of Animal Husbandry, Bengaluru and Dr. Arun Rangaswamy, Trustee, Samabhava.

On January 21 and 22 in two separate events, held at Jain College, Jayanagar and Jain College, J.C.Road, "The Plastic Cow" film was screened and sensitized the students about the plight of the "Plastic Cow". Feedback forms were given to participants in two of the events. In the event held on January 12th, the feedback forms were filled up by 40 members of the community and in the event held on January 22nd, the forms were filled up by 120 students. The results from both the groups are interesting and show that, "whether it is adult citizens of the community or the young people, there is serious concern about the plight of the cattle left to forage from the garbage bins in the streets of the metros of our country".

When asked, "Would you like to help create awareness in your community about the Plastic Cow Project and be part of the Bangalore Plastic Cow Volunteer Group?" People responded ranged from 55% for the concerned citizens and 54% for the student group giving a positive rating for the film. Students expressed greater enthusiasm to organize a screening of the film with 84% of the students wanting that they would like to organize a similar screening event in their community while among the concerned citizen group, 67% stated that they would organize such an event.

'Branding' Horses Painful & Ineffective

Branding of horses with heat is excruciatingly painful and causes third degree burn injury on the sensitive skins of horses. In a collaborative study between the Veterinary Universities of Germany and Vienna, carried out by Dr Aurich and co-investigators, it is now proved that branding of horses is ineffective in identifying them. In the abstract, the investigators write,"This study analysed the readability of branding symbols and histomorphological alterations at the branding sites. A total of 248 horses in an equestrian championship were available for identification of symbols and histological analysis. All except one horse showed histological changes at the brand site, including epidermal hyperplasia, increase of dermal collagenous fibrous tissue and loss of epidermal structures. In two foals, an alternative to necrotizing dermatitis was observed and interpreted as a complication of recent branding lesions. Despite the fact that hot iron branding caused lesions compatible with third degree thermal injury, it did not allow unambiguous identification of a large proportion of older horses. While the breed-specific symbol was consistently identified by three independent investigators in 84% of the horses, the double-digit branding number was read correctly by all three investigators in less than 40%. In conclusion, hot iron branding in horses causes lesions compatible with third degree thermal injury but does not always allow for identification of horses. The field work for this study was carried at the Graf Lehndorff Institute for Equine Science, a joint research unit of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria and the Brandenburg Stier College. All authors declare no conflicts of interest. The post-mortem analysis was performed at the Department of Pathology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Hannover, Germany. It may be noted that branding of horses with heat has been banned in Scotland, Sweden and Denmark.


Students of Leo College in Bengaluru Watch the Plastic Cow Film

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उपयुक्त देंद को चुने प्रारंभ अवसर को रोकने को रोल दें वन पर अन्य किसी वन का। गैंडल को आधिकारिक अवसर तक सहित जल्द से गैंडल का माहौल का फिर कर दें। यह रोल है जब भी की के लिए देबोग की वीडियो का आयतन है। आयतन देबोग के देबोग गैंडल से देबोग की वीडियो देबोग के भविष्य का किया जा रहा है।

इस गैंडल का देबोग के देबोग अवसर के लिए पहले, गैंडल की रोल कर सकता है। गैंडल की रोल कर सकता है।

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