



The Animal Welfare Board of India is an umbrella of the SPCAs / AWOs and animal welfare workers. The Board encourages animal welfare activities, advises the Central and State Governments on issues relating to Animal Welfare, particularly the prevention of cruelty to animals, and also helps to formulate animal welfare policies / legislations.

DIVINITY IN ANIMAL WELFARE WORK

Great humanitarian and Founder of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) used to tell, the God is love and therefore, every person and every animal who really loves animals, has inspiration of God, something immortal in him. Divine Life Society of South Africa, Durban, has published a series of books based on kindness and compassion to animals. In the Call of Compassion, compassion volume under sage of compassion stated about various instances of love and compassion to animals, birds, insects and snakes even scorpions. The divine master, Sri Swami Sivananda of Devine Life Society, South Africa, has expressed his experience and inner vision of seeing God in everything and summarised that no animal should suffer by any harm or injury while bathing in the Ganges, if an insect came floating by struggling for life, he would at once take it into his palm and leave into the bank.

He wrote about his unique experience of care of dog who was sick since many days. While on his way back to his cottage from the office, with a crowd of devotees following him in mirth and devotion, the master suddenly stopped and closed his eyes, as if in prayer. He had noticed a dog resting in a semi-conscious state, emaciated and exhausted. There was a big and deep ulcer on its head. Scores of passers-by were all walking past unconcernedly.

"Poor creature!" exclaimed the master. "This injury could not have been the result of an accident. It appears to be some chronic infection and it should be attended to at once".

He immediately called for the resident doctors, Dr. Punjabi Prahlad and Ram Chandaran, to do the needful. In a few moments all those following the master began expressing sentiments of pity and sympathy for the poor beast.

The doctors at once attended to the dog when it woke up from its slumber. They gave him plenty of food and drink, sprinkled the necessary powders, and applied medicines on the ulcer, finally bandaging the wound.

At the evening prayer service, the first thing that the master anxiously enquired about was the health of the dog, and called upon the doctors to give their day's report. He was happy to learn that the treatment was proving effective and the dog progressing magnificently.

The above anecdotes was explained by Swamy Sivananda, who is very popular and international spiritual personality. He also stated about animals feeling and the relationship with man which was deeply interrelated by the divinity. But, such events happen with our animal activists in their day-to-day life whenever they rescue the animals from adverse situations, the animal thanks the master for saving his life.

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PLAN FOR COMPREHENSIVE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT: JAIRAM RAMESH, HON'BLE MINISTER

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha was informed that the Government would come forward with a comprehensive



Animal Welfare Act with "steep penalties". Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests,

Shri Jairam Ramesh, said the country has an elaborate legal network and an institutional network for implementing both the law as well as the Rules. He said the Animal Welfare Board of India has registered 2,800 NGOs on its books out of which some 1,700 are goshalas which take care of migrant, roaming, unacknowledged animals on the streets. He said despite all these assistance, there were still visible cases of cruelty,

besides organised cases of cruelty such as bull-fighting which is an accepted cultural practice in many states.

When Shri N.S.V.Chittha, Hon'ble MP said that in Tamil Nadu bull-fighting is celebrated during the festival of harvest, Shri Ramesh said that "not every cultural practice is sustainable". When the member said that it cannot be treated as cruelty to animals, the Minister said that it has also seen the death of human beings. That was why, he said, the Animal Welfare Board moved the apex court in 2007 to ban jallikattu. But in response to this, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly passed regulations. Shri Ramesh said that the Catalonia Province of Spain, long associated with gory bull-fighting, has banned bull-fighting and why not Tamil Nadu ban jallikattu?

When Ms. Maneka Gandhi, Hon'ble MP sought to know whether he would ban animal sacrifice practised across the country, the Minister said that a number of states have banned animal

sacrifice in religious places. He said that he would send an advisory to all the states to emulate the states which have already banned animal sacrifices.

The Minister also voiced concern, in response to a query from Shri Lalu Prasad, Hon'ble MP over the Sonpur Mela (Bihar) where elephants are traded. He said the Ministry of Environment and Forests has set up an Expert Group on Project Elephant which would submit its report by the end of August 2010. As long as the Sonpur Mela remains, the problem of elephant trade with all its consequences would continue, he said, adding that is why he has asked the group to look at the future of Sonpur Mela.

The Minister also described as "a matter of great shame" the manner in which elephants are treated in some of the most sacred temples of the country. (INS)



AWBI-ABC and Humane Education Workshop

HYDERABAD: Following repeated reports of dog killings in the State, Blue cross of Hyderabad approached the Chairman, AWBI to conduct a workshop for AWOs in the State to train the new ABC, Standard Operative Proceedure (SOP) and Humane Education presentations. Blue Cross was authorized to conduct the workshop to empower AWOs to take up the ABC programme in their respective places. The Chairman constituted a Steering Committee for Supervision of Stray Animal Control for the State and Blue Cross is a member in the committee.

On behalf of AWBI, BCH conducted a state wide workshop to brief the State animal welfare organizations on

the new Animal Birth Control SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) and humane Education. Maj.Gen.(Retd.) Dr. R.M.Kharb, Chairman, AWBI, inaugurated the workshop, while 18 AWOs took part in it. The new ABC (SOP) is now mandatory for all organizations conducting the ABC programme whether they are government or private entities or AWOs. Participants were guided on how to develop and formulate the ABC programme in their area, how to pass resolutions for an effective ABC programme in A.P., etc.

Smt. Amala Akkineni demonstrated presentations on various animal welfare issues and conducted group practice sessions for the participants. Senior and experienced participants took the responsibility of mentoring other participants during practice. Mr. Sriram took care of organizing, communicating and arranging all necessary logistics for the workshop.

The programme was funded by Blue Cross. GHMC officials Shri Aleem Basha and Dr. Venkateswara Reddy also attended the programme.

SC seeks TNs views on jallikattu duration

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court sought the Tamil Nadu Governments response on suggestions made by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) to limit the annual bull taming event jallikattu to two months, increase security deposit by



organisers to Rs 20 lakh and hike the fine for violations to Rs 1 lakh from Rs 10,000. Appearing for AWBI, Senior Advocate told a Bench comprising Hon'ble Justice R V Raveendran and H L Gokhale that the Regulation of Jallikattu Act, 2009 needed to be made stringent if misuse of the event and loss of human lives were to be averted. Shri Panjwani suggested that Section 4(ix) of the Act, mandating organisers to deposit Rs 2 lakh as security to cover exigencies like death or injuries of participants, needed to be enhanced to Rs 20 lakh.



He said the events, which were related to the harvest festival, need not be permitted for five months and the law should be amended to limit it to January and February. He also objected to the mild penalty Rs 10,000 imposed on organisers found violating provisions of law and suggested that it be made Rs 1 lakh.

On July 9, the apex court had expressed dissatisfaction at the deterrent provisions of the law and had termed it too lenient. Its first objection was to the period January to May permitted under the 2009 law.

HC comes to rescue of bats

MADURAI: The Madurai Bench of Madras high court has rushed to the rescue of bat colonies facing threat in the campus of a city college.

It has restrained the management of Saraswathi Narayanan college at Perungudi from cutting down the trees in its campus, which serves as a habitat for about 5,000 fruit-eating bats. Passing the interim order, a division bench comprising Justices D. Murugesan and M. Duraishwamy directed the district forest officer to inspect the college and submit a report by August 18 on the number and nature of trees felled by the college management so far. The DFO was also ordered to account the number of trees available, now, on its premises.

Temple elephants are paying a price for their popularity. Essentially creatures of the wild and given to foraging over vast tracts of forest area, elephants are likely to see their health adversely affected while in captivity. "It is not a very happy situation right now," admitted Dr VN Singh, chief conservator of forests.

"The guidelines on proper care for an elephant are still a grey area that most mahouts and owners are unaware of. So we ordered district forest officers to do a round of inspection of temples. Our veterinary doctors also checked the elephants. We found many elephants suffering from a lot of ailments."

Humane Education Program organized

NEW DELHI: A Humane Education Program for students of **Chinmaya Vidyalaya** was organized by STRAW – "Stray Relief and Animal Welfare" on August 19, 2010 at their school premises at Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. Nearly, hundred children were sensitized about the need for compassion and kinheartedness towards animals and other living creatures, who also share this world with us.

The highlight of the program was the introduction of puppies into the program, which excited the children very much. A man-to-animal connection was

The Bench passed the interim order following a public interest litigation filed by Tamil Nadu Science Forum which alleged that the college had felled more than 25 trees. In his affidavit, forum president Shri S. Krishnasamy said the numerous trees in the campus served as a sanctuary for fruit-eating bats (Indian flying fox) and different species of birds besides providing a good environment for the students and staff.

The college secretary, he claimed, allowed timber traders to fell those trees on August 3 following which timber worth more than Rs 10 lakh was sold in the open market without obtaining permission from the forest department. His counsel T. Lajapathi Roy submitted that as per section 27 of the Tamil Nadu Private Colleges (Regulation) Act, private colleges should not transfer its properties by way of sale without obtaining permission from the government.

Campaign against abandoning pets

CHENNAI: Chennai seems to be going the way of other metros, with pets being abandoned more often than ever, complain animal activists. To drive the message home, animal welfare organisation People For Animals (PfA) launched a "Don't Abandon Your Pets" campaign along with Amrutanjan Healthcare. The number of abandoned pets has grown from two or three a

surely achieved. Children picked up the puppies, played with them, made a fuss over them and simply enjoyed every bit of it. The puppies loved it too.

The school authorities appreciated the event and have agreed to carry out these humane education workshops for other classes as well, for the next three months. This program was conducted with the help of volunteers who participated wholeheartedly.

STRAW – Stray Relief and Animal Welfare is an animal welfare organization that is recognized by the Animal Welfare Board of India and is a member society of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), UK. STRAW strives to achieve its motto of "Animal Welfare through Education" by means of humane education programs that are conducted in schools.

The idea is to plant a seed of compassion, care and respect for animals and other living creatures into the hearts of children in particular and people in general.

The response to the programmes in many schools of Delhi has been very encouraging. Both the children and their teachers love it because it contributes not only to animal welfare but also to the all round development of the child. To find out more, please visit: www.strawindia.org.



month five years ago, to around two pets a week now. To highlight this issue, actress and animal lover Sadaa has agreed to be the brand ambassador for the campaign.

PfA Chennai has over 1,000 animals which includes horses, cattle, dogs, pigs, cats and sheep, all rescued from various situations of purposeful violence. Among these are around 500 dogs, all of which have been abandoned by their owners. Our focus is on preventing the interstate transport of live animals in terrible conditions. We now find that one of our biggest missions is handling abandoned pets, a PfA spokesperson said. These animals go through immense anguish and many of them do not survive the trauma, sadness and shock of being thrown out on the streets or abandoned in a shelter, the spokesperson said.

Activists say the reasons for abandoning pets range from rising costs, new jobs forcing people to move, landlords who don't allow pets,

Support and Care for Zoo Animals

MYSORE: Former Indian cricketer, Shri Javagal Srinath inaugurated an awareness programme on the animal adoption scheme at the century-old Mysore zoo. The programme was held in the presence of Shivarathri Deshikendra Swami of Suttur Math and other dignitaries here on August 28. "We take this opportunity to request the public, institutions and philanthropists to adopt an animal and be a proud ambassador of the conservation programmes taken up at the zoo," said a press release from the zoo.

The adoption scheme is a novel way to show support and care for wild animals. Adoption contributes towards feeding of the animal for one year and will be part of the zoo's efforts in wildlife conservation. There is an option of adopting the animal for less than one year as well. Under the scheme, the intending adopters receive a complimentary entry pass to the zoo and a certificate; they can also claim rebate under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act. The animal adoption scheme has elicited a good response after it was re-launched in 2002.

A record number of animal lovers and institutions have adopted animals and birds under the scheme in 2009-10. As

birth of a child, wrong advice from doctors, old age of pets, lack of manpower and time to care for pets. We come across several dogs belonging to the German Shepherd and Doberman breeds, abandoned because of health problems associated with inbreeding, caused by unscrupulous commercial breeders, the PfA spokesperson said.

Govt mulls ban on blessing by elephants

CHENNAI: Having a giant hairy trunk touching your head as though Lord Ganesha himself was bestowing his blessings is something that devotees, adults and kids alike, covet most in a temple. But, this could soon end. The Tamil Nadu government is considering a ban on the use of elephants in temples for the purposes of blessing devotees.

The idea is based on a recommendation by forest officials. The issue was raised during a meeting between the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments and forest department officials after an inspection by forest officers in temples in the state. They found that the animals are housed in improper conditions and vulnerable to a host of diseases and ailments. Another reason raised was the possibility of the spread of diseases on contact with humans.

many as 261 animals and birds were adopted for Rs. 22,16,623. In 2010-11 (up to August 8), 106 animals and birds have been adopted for Rs. 12,39,876, the zoo said. □

ABC Programme Organised

VADODARA: Vadodara Centre for Animal Rescue and Emergency (VCARE) has an administrative office at Kalpvruk complex, Gohri and shelter at Lakdikui village near Jaspur in Padra Taluk. Their work include operating and sterilising the stray dogs and also attending calls of sick and injured animals with their limited resources. With the help of Unitey Way of Baroda, they have built full fledged and proper operation theatre.

Stray bitches become very aggressive and start attacking children and people walking on the roads as they want to protect their puppies. Thinking about these puppies and their mothers, VCARE provided a special underground enclosure for them to live separately with their little ones and enjoy their motherhood.

VCARE have been very successful with the Animal Birth Control Programme funded by the Vadodara Mahanagar Seva Sadan. Till now, they have sterilised over 1822 canines.

तेरहवाँ महावीर अवार्ड समारोह संपन्न

करुणा एवं अहिंसा के क्षेत्र में सामाजिक सेवा करने वाले हुए सम्मानित

चेन्नई: दिनांक 9 जुलाई 2010 को 13वां महावीर अवार्ड समारोह चेन्नई में गिण्डि स्थित राजभवन के दरबार हाल में हुआ। एम.एस. स्वामीनाथन, रिसर्व फाउण्डेशन के चेयरमैन एवं सांसद प्रोफेसर एम.एस. स्वामीनाथन समारोह के मुख्य अतिथि थे।

श्री स्वामीनाथन ने अवार्ड वितरित कर अपने वक्तव्य में कहा कि आपसी सौहार्द, सहनशीलता, अहिंसा आदि गुणों को जीवन में अपनाना चाहिए। भगवान महावीर ने यही संदेश दिया था। वर्तमान संदर्भ में उनकी बहुत जरूरत है।

उन्होंने आगे कहा कि खुद के लिए सभी जीते हैं, पर दूसरों के लिए जीना ही वास्तव में जीना है। अवार्ड विजेताओं ने इसे प्रमाणित कर दिया है। वे सब बधाई के पात्र हैं। उन्होंने कहा महावीर अवार्ड के जरिए न केवल महावीर के सिद्धान्तों को आगे बढ़ाया जा रहा है; बल्कि सही कार्यों को बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है। भगवान महावीर फाउण्डेशन का यह कार्य प्रशंसनीय है एवं सुगलचन्द जैन व अन्य ट्रस्टीगण, चयन समिति के सदस्यगण बधाई के पात्र हैं।

श्री भगवान महावीर फाउण्डेशन के प्रबंध न्यासी एन.सुगलचंद जैन ने कहा कि अब तक तीन अवार्ड दिए जाते रहे हैं और हर अवार्ड के तहत पांच लाख रुपये की राशि दी जाती है। फाउण्डेशन ने अब तक 35 अवार्ड दिए हैं। इनमें 13 प्रदेशों से अवार्ड प्राप्त करने वाले शामिल हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि अवार्ड के लिए हमारे पास कई आवेदन आए जिनमें कई गरीबों के लिए काम करने वाले लोग एवं संस्थाएँ हैं। इस कारण अवार्ड के चयन में निर्णयकों को निर्णय करने में विशेष सावधानी बरतनी पड़ी। उन्होंने कहा कि अवार्ड की संख्या तीन से बढ़ाकर चार की जा रही है।

अब शिक्षा एवं स्वास्थ्य के लिए अलग-अलग अवार्ड दिए जाएंगे। इसके साथ ही फाउण्डेशन ने अवार्ड में दी जाने वाली राशि को भी 5 लाख से बढ़ाकर 10 लाख रुपये करने का निर्णय किया है। शिक्षा एवं स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में विशेष कार्य करने पर ट्राइबल हैल्थ इनिशिएटिव, धर्मपुरी (तमिलनाडु) को अवार्ड दिया गया, डॉ. रेगी एम जार्ज तथा डॉ. ललिता रेगी ने

अवार्ड प्राप्त किया। सामुदायिक एवं समाज सेवा के क्षेत्र में करणीनगर विकास समिति कोटा (राजस्थान) तथा स्वामी विवेकानन्द इन्टीग्रेटेड रूरल हैल्थ सेन्टर, पावागड (कर्नाटक) को अवार्ड दिया गया। करणीनगर विकास समिति की ओर से श्रीमती प्रसन्ना एवं श्री एम.सी.भन्डारी ने अवार्ड प्राप्त किया। स्वामी विवेकानन्द इन्टीग्रेटेड रूरल हैल्थ सेन्टर की ओर से स्वामी जापानन्दा ने अवार्ड प्राप्त किया।

श्री कलावती विनोद कुमार, प्रमोद कुमार एवं मास्टर प्रतीक ने अवार्ड विजेताओं को दिए जाने वाले प्रशस्ति पत्र का वाचन किया। अवार्ड विजेताओं को प्रशस्ति पत्र, पांच लाख रुपये की राशि का चेक तथा मोमेन्टो दिया गया। निर्णायक मंडल के सदस्यों दीपचन्द गारडी प्रो.बी.एम.हेगडे तथा टी.एस.कृष्णमूर्ति को मोमेन्टो प्रदान कर सम्मानित किया गया। फाउण्डेशन के प्रबंध न्यासी श्री सुगलचन्द जैन ने मुख्य अतिथि डॉ. स्वामीनाथन को मोमेन्टो प्रदान कर उनका सम्मान किया। भगवान महावीर फाउण्डेशन के ट्रस्टी श्री एस.प्रसन्नचन्द

जैन ने धन्यवाद ज्ञापित किया। श्री दीपचन्द गारडो ने अवार्ड डे पुस्तिका का विमोचन किया। फाउण्डेशन के जनसंपर्क अधिकारी श्री पारस जैन ने जैन आचार्य के संदेश का वाचन किया। इस अवसर पर श्री जी.एन.दमानी ने माल्यार्पण कर मुख्य अतिथि स्वामीनाथन का सम्मान किया। श्री शांतिलाल बी.छेद्वा ने माला तथा श्री उत्तमचन्द भण्डारी ने शाल से समाजसेवी श्री दीपचन्द गारडी का स्वागत किया।

श्री महावीरचंद संकलेचा ने माला तथा मांगीलाल खाटेड़ ने शाल से भारतीय विद्या भवन मैंगलोर के चेयरमैन प्रो.बी.एम. हेगडे का स्वागत किया। भगवान महावीर फाउण्डेशन के जनसंपर्क अधिकारी श्री पारस जैन ने माला तथा श्री अमरचंद लूंकड़ ने शाल से देश के पूर्व मुख्य चुनाव आयुक्त श्री टी.एस.कृष्णमूर्ति का स्वागत किया। प्रार्थना के साथ कार्यक्रम की शुरुआत हुई थी, भगवान महावीर फाउण्डेशन के ट्रस्टी श्री एस.प्रसन्नचंद जैन ने धन्यवाद ज्ञापित कर कार्यक्रम का समापन किया। □

उत्तर प्रदेश शासन

पशुधन अनुभाग - 1

संख्या-3152/37-1-10-11(29)/2001

लखनऊ : दिनांक 5 जुलाई 2010

विज्ञप्ति/अधिसूचना

मा.उच्चतम न्यायालय में योजित रिट याचिका संख्या-440/2000 सुश्री गीताशेषमणि बनान यूनिन आफ इंडिया व अन्य में पारित मा.उच्चतम न्यायालय के आदेश दिनांक 6.8.2008 के समादर में श्री राज्यपाल उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रादेशिक जीव जन्तु कल्याण बोर्ड (स्टेट एनीमल वेल्फेयर बोर्ड) का निम्नवत गठन किये जाने की सहर्ष स्वीकृति प्रदान करते हैं:-

1.	मा.पशुधन मंत्री	अध्यक्ष
2.	प्रमुख सचिव/सचिव, पशुधन विभाग, उ.प्र. शासन	उपाध्यक्ष
3.	प्रमुख सचिव/सचिव, गृह विभाग, उ.प्र.शासन	सदस्य
4.	प्रमुख सचिव/सचिव वन विभाग, उ.प्र.शासन	सदस्य
5.	प्रमुख सचिव/सचिव, नगर विकास विभाग, उ.प्र.शासन	सदस्य
6.	पुलिस महानिदेशक, उ.प्र.	सदस्य
7.	सचिव, उ.प्र.गो सेवा आयोग	सदस्य
8.	परिवहन आयुक्त, उ.प्र.	सदस्य
9.	मुख्य वन जीव संरक्षक	सदस्य
10.	निदेशक, पशुपालन विभाग, उ.प्र.लखनऊ	सदस्य
11.	भारतीय जीव जन्तु कल्याण बोर्ड भारत सरकार द्वारा मान्यता प्राप्त स्वेच्छिक संस्थाओं के राज्य सरकार द्वारा नामित 05 प्रतिनिधि	सदस्य
12.	पशु कल्याण कार्यक्रमों में संलग्न राज्य सरकार द्वारा नामित 05 प्रतिनिधि	सदस्य
13.	निदेशक, सी.डी.आर.आई. लखनऊ सदस्य	

डॉ. हरशरण दास
सचिव

आदेश

उ.प्र.शासन, पशुधन अनुभाग-1 के विज्ञप्ति/अधिसूचना सं.3548/37-1-10-11 (29)2001 दिनांक 28-7-2010 द्वारा महामहिम श्री राज्यपाल महोदय, उ.प्र. के समस्त जनपदों में समय-समय पर निर्गत विज्ञप्ति/अधिसूचना द्वारा गठित सोसायटी फार प्रिवेंशन आफ क्रुएल्टी टू एनिमल्स (एसपीसीए) को तात्कालिक प्रभाव से भंग किया गया है।

अतः जनपद देवरिया में उ.प्र. शासन के विज्ञप्ति/अधिसूचना सं.4172/12-प/1-2002-11(29)/2001, दिनांक 10-7-2002 के परिपालन में गठित एस.पी.सी.ए. राघवनगर, जनपद देवरिया, पंजीयन सं.2285/2008-9, दिनांक 28-3-2009 को तात्कालिक प्रभाव से भंग किया जाता है।

(पवन कुमार)

जिलाधिकारी, देवरिया

कार्यालय जिलाधिकारी, देवरिया

पत्रांक 772/पशुपालन/एस.पी.सी.ए./10-11 दिनांक 3/अगस्त, 2010

प्रतिलिपि - निम्नलिखित को सूचनार्थ एवं आवश्यक कार्यवाही हेतु प्रेषित

- डा. शशिधर मिश्र, कार्यकारी अध्यक्ष, एसपीसीए, मु.सदभावना भवन, राघव नगर, देवरिया
पंजीयन सं.2285/08-9, दिनांक 28-3-2009 को पालनार्थ।
- सहायक रजिस्ट्रार, फर्म्स सोसायटीज तथा चिट्स, गोरखपुर को निर्देश के साथ कि पंजीयन सं.2285/दिनांक 28-3-2009 के पंजीयन को निरस्त/समाप्त करने की कार्यवाही करते हुए अवगत करावें।
- उप निदेशक, पशु पालन विभाग, गोरखपुर मण्डल, गोरखपुर
- मण्डलायुक्त, गोरखपुर मण्डल, गोरखपुर
- निदेशक, पशुपालन विभाग, उ.प्र.लखनऊ
- सचिव, पशुधन अनुभाग-1, उ.प्र.शासन, लखनऊ
- सचिव, भारतीय जीव जन्तु कल्याण बोर्ड, पर्यावरण वन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, पो.बा.8672, 13 थर्ड सीवार्ड रोड, वालमीकी नगर, तिरुवान्मियूर, चेन्नई - 41

जिलाधिकारी
देवरिया

LET'S CHUCK THE PLASTIC BAG

I am standing at the grocery store waiting for my things to be billed — mutely watching an endless number of plastic bags being used to pack items for every customer. Even after all the hue and cry about the environment, we go about our usual routine and think it is someone else's problem, not realising that we are contributing very much to it. I helplessly handed out the cloth bags that I brought from my house.

With global warming on the rise, we have to do every bit that we can to save the environment. The little that we can do without much effort from our side is to say "no" to plastic bags. It does not cost us anything, just a small practice of carrying our own bags to the shopping malls/grocery stores. We would contribute much by just not using plastic bags.

Many countries and States are debating a ban on plastic bags or taxing their use. China and Bangladesh have banned plastic bags, while Ireland has reduced consumption by 90 per cent through levying a fee on each bag. San Francisco is the first city in U.S. which has banned plastic bags. In India, Rajasthan is the first State to ban plastic bags.

Carry a cloth bag

Our lifestyle is such that we go unprepared for any shopping, as every shop provides us with easy-to-use

plastic bags. The best alternative would be to always take our own cloth bags whenever we go out. Or even re-use the plastic bags that are piling up at our house. If we really give a try, very little effort is required.

Most of us have the excuse of saying that we need the plastic bags to line our trash cans. Every house has a good store of unused plastic bags, which only keeps increasing by the day (even after the use for the trash cans). There are many alternatives for the garbage, if we really think about it. Ninety per cent of the time, it is only dry waste that we throw away. We can use paper bags or cardboard boxes that come with some groceries, like cornflakes, cereals, etc.

Another option would be to re-use the plastic bags that are used for packing rice, wheat, bread, dal, etc. What would we do if every plastic bag was charged at, say, Rs.10 or if plastic bags were banned by the government? Would we not seriously think of alternatives and find our way through? As a common man, there is much more to be done to protect the environment — compost your waste, reduce your carbon footprint, say 'no' to plastic bottles and other plastic products, plant more trees, plan for rainwater harvesting and so on. The list can go on. But let us take the first step. □

FIRST MAJOR REGION SPANISH BANS BULLFIGHTING

SPAIN: Lawmakers in Catalonia outlawed bullfighting, making it Spain's first major region to ban the deadly, centuries-old ballet between matador and beast after heated debate that pitted animal rights against a pillar of traditional culture. Cheers broke out in the local 135-seat legislature after the speaker announced the ban had passed 68-to-55 with nine abstentions.

The ban will take effect in 2012 in the northeastern coastal region whose capital is Barcelona. Catalonia is a powerful, wealthy area with its own language and culture and a large degree of self-rule. Many in Spain have seen the pressure here for a bullfighting ban as a further bid by Catalonia to stand out from the rest of the country. The practical effect of the ban will be limited: Catalonia has only one functioning bullring, in Barcelona, while another disused one is being turned into a shopping mall. It stages 15 fights a year which are rarely sold out, out of a nationwide total of roughly 1,000 bouts per season.

Still, bullfighting buffs and Spanish conservatives have taken the drama very seriously, seeing a stinging anti-Spanish rebuke in the grass roots, anti-bullfighting drive which started in the region last year. But Joan Puigcercos, a lawmaker from a Catalan pro-independence party, insisted that this was not about politics or national identity but rather "the suffering of the animal. That is the question, nothing more."

He said that even though attendance at bullfights is on the decline in Spain it would be morally wrong to sit back and just let the Spanish national pastime die a natural death. However, the Catalan regional president, Jose Montilla, said that the Catalonia should have done just that - let social customs evolve to the point where bullfighting would vanish on its own, rather than legislate an end to it and deny people's right to choose whether to go the ring.

"I voted against the ban because I believe in freedom," Montilla said. □

The Animal Welfare Board of India is an umbrella of the SPCAs / AWOs and Animal Welfare Workers. The Board encourages Animal Welfare activities, advises the Central and State Governments on issues relating to Animal Welfare, particularly the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and also helps to formulate Animal Welfare Policies / Legislations.

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- Supreme court seeks TN jallikattu duration
- Humane education programme organised
- Let's chuck the plastic bag



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