

Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection

AFFCAP May - June 2015 Newsletter



**NARENDRA MODI GOVT PLEDGES TO PROTECT
INDIGENOUS COWS**

**HARYANA ASSEMBLY PASSES BILL
BANNING COW SLAUGHTER**

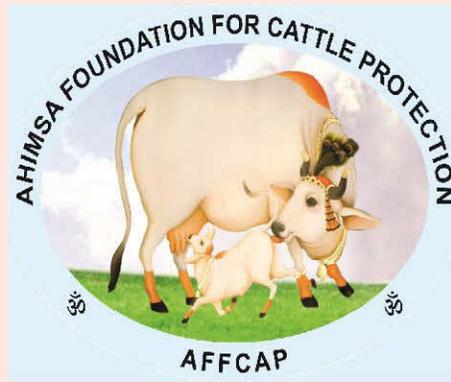
**SELLING THE SACRED COW: INDIA'S
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PICTURE PERFECT

**No
Slaughter**



**No
Slaughter**

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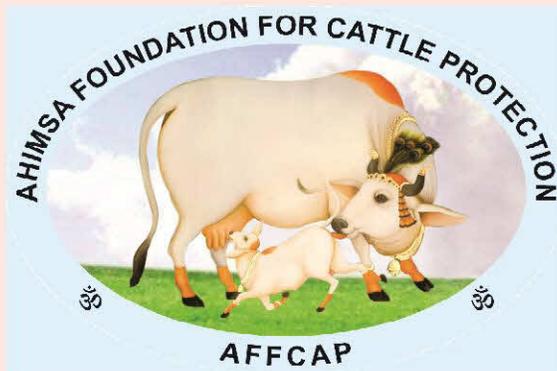
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MAHABHARATA ANUSHASHAN PARVAN: CHAPTER 51

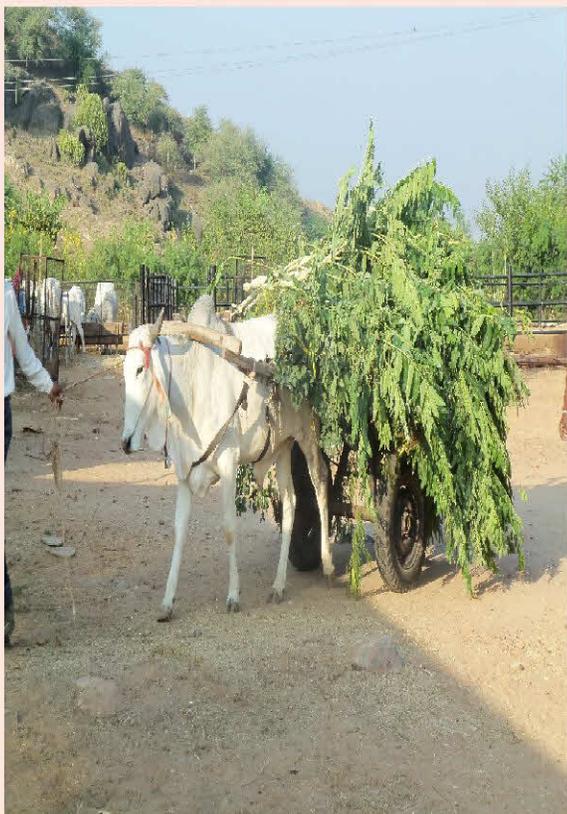
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MAHARASHTRA BEEF BAN LAW: FIRST CASE REGISTERED IN MALEGAO

**No
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The last few months have seen some positive developments within the field of cow protection. The states of Haryana and Maharashtra have enacted legislation which prohibits the slaughtering of cows.

This is a positive step as it adds legal rights to the existing moral and spiritual authority of Indian culture.

Government assistance is crucial in the curtailing of animal slaughter within the confines of India.

So this issue of the Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection highlights these latest developments among others and we pray you find it informative.

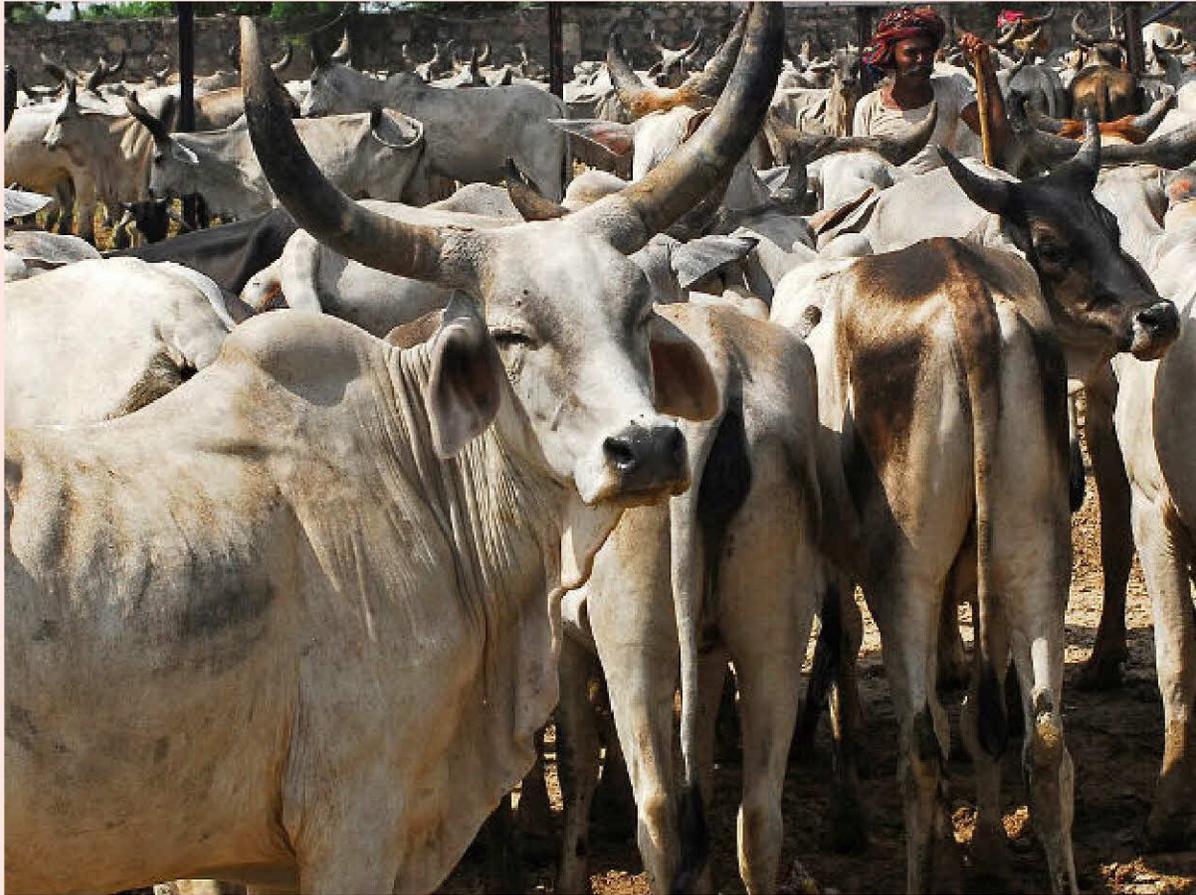




PICTURE PERFECT



Narendra Modi government pledges to protect indigenous cows



The newly appointed Modi government is mulling to launch national programme called 'Rashtriya Gokul Mission' to protect local cow breeds. According to reports, an amount of Rs 500 crore has been earmarked for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development programme and out of which Rs 150 crore will be specially allocated for the protection of indigenous cow breeds. Let's discuss all issue related with this new endeavor of the Modi Government.

What is being planned? •

The aim of the mission is to protect Indigenous cow from being cross-bred into different varieties.

- Focus will be largely to give a push to local breeding programme on the line of elite local breeds like Gir, Sahiwal, Rathi to enhance milk production.
- The local cow breed will be protected through traditional-style "gaushalas" or cattle-care centres.
- The scheme has provision to acknowledge those farmers who works rigorously in the direction.
- The "Gopal Ratna" awards will be conferred to them.
- The scheme also makes a point about upkeep of cattle after their milk producing phase gets over and then they often used for the purpose of meat.

Official reaction

- The Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh said, "The Mission aims to conserve and develop indigenous breeds in a focused and scientific manner and for that breeding facilities will be set up for varieties with high-genetic pedigree".
- He further stated, indigenous cattle are largely ignored despite the fact that they are better adapted to the country's climate".

What is the Idea behind the Mission?

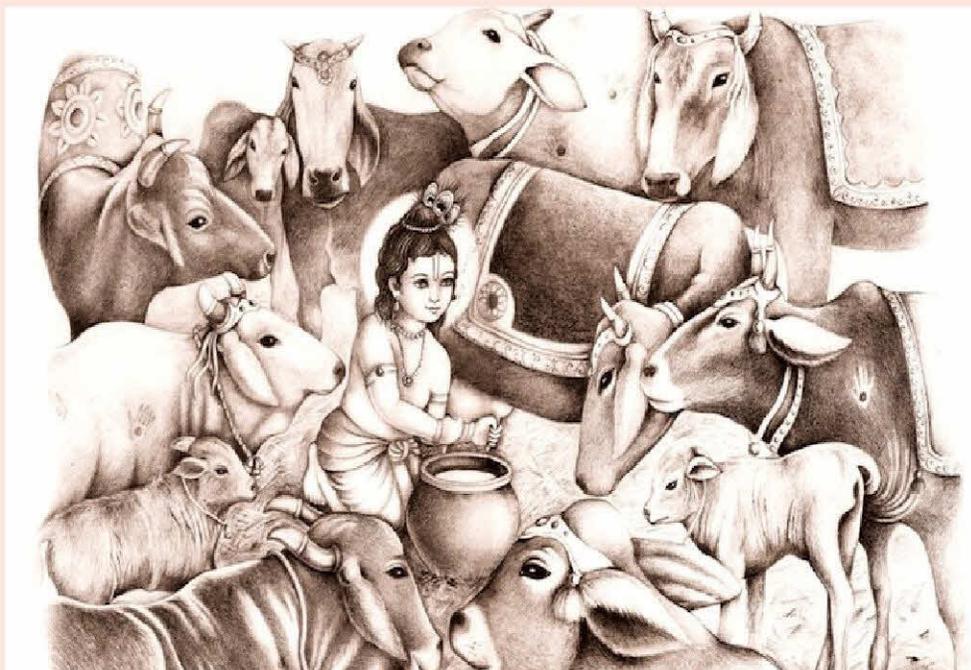
- The idea is to increase milk production which is dismal in comparison to US, UK, and Israel.
- Though India has attained the numero uno position in milk production but that is only because the country is home of world's largest livestock population.
- Through the programme, the aim is to increase high yield per cow which is very low in comparison to the European countries like US.

Low yield per cow in India

- The average daily milk yield for crossbred cattle in India is at 7.1 kg per day while it is at 25.6 in UK, US (32.8) and Israel (38.6).
- The reason behind the low yield in India is because of intrinsic and extrinsic factors both.
- The intrinsic factor is low genetic potential while extrinsic is related with number of reasons like poor nutrition and feed management, inferior farm management practices and inefficient implementation of breed improvement programmes.
- At present, India is largely using Jersey, a native of Netherlands and British origin Holstein for cross-breeding purposes.

Hindus consider cow as their mother and calls them gau mata. Even Hindu's revered scripture Rig Veda has the mention of cow as the symbol of wealth and prosperity. Apart from that cow dung and urine is used for organic manure and other purposes. So it's right move in right direction

<http://savemothercow.com/narendra-modi-government-pledges-protect-indigenous-cows/>



Haryana Assembly Passes Bill Banning Cow Slaughter, Sale of Beef

All India | Written by Anand Kumar Patel, Anand Kumar Patel (With inputs from IANS) | Updated: March 16, 2015 23:56 IST



File photo of Haryana Chief Minister ML Khattar

CHANDIGARH: The Haryana Assembly on Monday evening unanimously passed a bill under which cow slaughter and the sale of beef have been banned in the state. The new law will also promote conservation and development of indigenous breeds of cows and establish institutions to keep, maintain and take care of the infirm, injured, stray and uneconomic cows.

As per the Haryana 'Gauvansh Sanrakshan and Gausamvardhan' Bill, 2015, which was passed with two amendments, a person found guilty of cow slaughter can get rigorous imprisonment not less than three years, which may extend upto 10 years along with a fine ranging from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 1 lakh.

Any person who exports cows for slaughter either directly or through somebody can get rigorous imprisonment not less than three years which may extend upto seven years, along with a fine from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 70,000.

However, the killing of a cow in an accident or self-defense will not be considered as slaugh-

ter under the Act.

The sale of beef will be completely banned in the state; the offence will be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for not less than three years and upto five years with fine of upto Rs. 50,000.

The government will also establish laboratories for differentiation of beef from that of the meat of other species of animals, and testing and identification of various constituents of milk.

Haryana Chief Minister ML Khattar told mediapersons that the previous law was weak and had several loopholes.

"We have come up with a more stringent law... this will enable cow protection and development at the same time," Mr Khattar said.

The opposition Indian National Lok Dal's legislator Zakir Hussain said he had suggested a couple of amendments but the government has accepted only one.

"There should have been a provision for transport of cows within the state to avoid harassment of transporters, also similar punishment should be in place for corrupt officials who are found involved in beef trade. Government has accepted the latter suggestion," Mr Hussain said.

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/haryana-assembly-passes-bill-banning-cow-slaughter-sale-of-beef-747167>

Story First Published: March 16, 2015 23:56 IST

After Maharashtra... continued from page 8

In case of Maharashtra, the bill banning cow slaughter in Maharashtra, which was pending for nearly 20 years, received the President's assent on 3 March. This measure has taken almost twenty years to materialise was initiated during the previous Sena-BJP government. The bill was first submitted to the President for approval on January 30, 1996. However, subsequent governments at the Centre, including the BJP-led NDA stalled it and did not seek the President's consent.

After the approval, chief minister Devendra Fadnavis tweeted, "Thanks a lot honourable President sir for the assent on Maharashtra Animal Preservation Bill. Our dream of ban on cow-slaughter becomes reality now."

In Maharashtra other than cows, the new law bans beef from the slaughter of bulls and bullocks, which was previously allowed based on a fit-for-slaughter certificate. The new Act will, however, allow the slaughter of water buffaloes. The punishment for the sale of beef or possession of it could be prison for five years with an additional fine of Rs 10,000 in the state. If Haryana makes cow slaughter equivalent to murder, it will take a step ahead of Maharashtra

<http://www.firstpost.com/living/maharashtra-haryana-govt-plans-bill-ban-beef-cow-slaughter-dealt-murder-2153543.html>

Image by Reuters

After Maharashtra, Haryana govt plans bill to ban beef, cow slaughter to be dealt as murder

by FP Staff Mar 14, 2015 09:29 IST

After Maharashtra, the Haryana government is all set to introduce a bill in the Budget session to ban beef and cow slaughter in the state, says a report in CNN-IBN. The report adds the government intends to slap punishment under section 302, which amounts to murder, for those who caught slaughtering cows and possessing beef.

The reports point out that Haryana Agriculture Minister Om Parkash Dhankar had on 8 March said that the state will get a bill for "protection and upkeep" of cows. The proposed act is called 'Govansh Sanrakshan and Gau Samvardhan (Cow Protection and Cow Conservation and Development) Bill'.



"For the scientific test and analysis, government is considering to establish laboratories to differentiate beef from meat of that of other animal species. Test reports of these laboratories will be valid evidence in the court of law," Dhankar said adding that sale of packaged beef has been banned in the state.

The state will provide also financial and technical support to cow welfare organisations that help in taking care of sick, injured, stray and uneconomic cows.

This is not the first time that the Haryana government has indicated that it was serious about protecting cows and banning the sale of beef. We had noted in an earlier report on

Firstpost that before the elections in the state, the BJP had promised to introduce penal provisions to ensure that punishment for cow slaughter is on a par with the punishment for murder.

The Haryana BJP president had said the law would be amended to raise the punishment for cow slaughter from the present five years imprisonment to penalties equal to the crime of murder.

At present the maximum punishment for cow slaughter in Haryana is five years jail with fine up to Rs 5000. But if the punishment becomes similar to murder, the minimum punishment will be life term, which sounds excessively harsh.

continued on page 7

Selling the Sacred Cow: India's Contentious Beef Industry

In a country where cattle are considered sacred, they're also paradoxically becoming a lucrative export.



A devotee sits next to an ornamented cow during the religious Hindu festival of "Makar Sankranti", which marks the start of spring, in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad January 15, 2008. (Krishnendu Halder/Reuters)

During the religious Hindu festival Sankranti every January, the open fields in farming villages throughout India are filled with people dressed in their best holiday attire celebrating the harvest and new beginnings. It is hard to say who is more colorful—the people or the cattle being led to the field. This is the day for honoring cattle and every household is parading its bemused bovine population: horns painted, necks garlanded, bells tinkling.

The Hindu reverence of cattle—particularly the cow—is well-known. Census data shows that nearly 80 percent of India's 1.2 billion population are Hindu. Most Hindus worship the cow and abstain from eating beef, so it might come as a surprise that India has become the world's second-largest beef exporter. India's beef industry says all its beef comes from buffaloes, a claim challenged by right wing, religious, and animal rights groups. While it's true that cow slaughter is banned by most Indian states and the export of cow meat is against the law, the acceptance of the cow's sacredness is not uniform throughout India and it's likely that cow meat is sneaking into the buffalo beef market. The export numbers don't match up, and it's suspected that cow meat is being snuck out.

"India has 115 million buffaloes, more than half the world's population, and produces about 1.53 million tons of beef every year."

The Indian beef industry didn't happen overnight. Export began in the 1960s and grew significantly in the last decade. Last year, India exported \$4.3 billion worth of beef, a number expected to increase by \$200 million this year. Today, India exports to 65 countries where its beef competes with meat from all over the world. The demand for Indian beef is especially high because it comes from free-ranging buffaloes fed on natural pastures and not pumped with growth hormones, says Santosh Sarangi, chairman of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). "India has 115

and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). "India has 115

million buffaloes, more than half the world's population, and produces about 1.53 million tons of beef every year," Sarangi says.

The debate of the sacredness of the cow is an issue even amongst India's historians with some arguing that the "holy cow" is a relatively recent phenomenon exploited by political and religious groups. In *The Myth of The Holy Cow*, historian Dwijendra Narayan Jha says that ancient Hindus ate beef—the cow got its revered status around 500 A.D. coinciding with an agricultural boom on the subcontinent. Jha's research offers copious evidence that ancient Hindu kings regularly sacrificed and ate animals including cattle. Cattle, even cow, meat was not sacred during the Vedic period (1000-5000 B.C.) which was the time when Hinduism's oldest scriptures—the Vedas—were written.

Around 500 A.D., India became an agrarian economy. Cattle, cows, and bulls, became invaluable for small-scale farming that, even today, is the heart of Indian rural life. This coincided with a time when Hindus were beginning to reject animal killing and gravitate towards vegetarianism. Cattle became not only a sign of wealth, but also sacred. (Interestingly, the buffalo never achieved this revered status.)

To Hindus, the cow is now worshipped as Gaumata (mother cow) because it provides milk to everyone. It symbolizes selfless giving. There are about 3,000 Gaushalas (cow shelters) in India where old and infirm cows are looked after. The cow, to many Hindus, embodies gentleness and non-violence. Hinduism holds the belief that all living creatures are sacred and promotes the idea of ahimsa (non-violence). "In China, dogs are killed for their meat and leather," says Poorva Joshipura, CEO, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, India. "In the United States, where they are loved and kept in homes, they aren't killed. So when people call for cow slaughter bans, there isn't always an ulterior motive."

India has a checkered past with cow slaughter bans. The Muslim Mughals ruled for three centuries and the British colonized the country for two centuries. The first Mughal emperor, Babur, banned cow slaughter in 1527 out of respect for Hindus; but some Hindu kings did not enforce the ban. The big picture today is a mixed one: On the one hand, there are Muslims and Christians who don't eat beef out of respect for their Hindu neighbors. On the other, there are Hindus who eat beef.

According to Chetan Rajhans, spokesperson for Hindu Janajagriti Samiti—a social organization that hopes to revive Hindu values, India's present anti-cow slaughter movement probably began with the Mutiny of 1857. The mutiny was an uprising of Indian soldiers against their British superiors for introducing pork and beef-greased cartridges for P53 Enfield rifles. The ends of these cartridges had to be bitten off before use, enraging Muslims, who don't eat pork, and Hindus, who don't eat beef. "The cartridges mobilized people to Gauraksha (cow protection)," says Rajhans. "That was the beginning of a nationwide Cow Protection Movement uniting Hindus against the British."

To give Modi credit, putting the brakes on India's beef industry isn't as easy as it sounds.

The Cow Protection Movement activists think there is little progress. "We want to completely stop slaughter of cow and bulls," says Ashoo Mongia, who founded the Rashtriye Gauraksha Sena (Cow Protection Army) in 2010. But as the cow's sacredness is debated, a nationwide ban is hard to impose. While some Indian states ban slaughter of any cattle, others ban slaughter of only cows, and some only ban the slaughter of milk-producing cows. States in the northeast-



ern part of the country have no bans at all. Punishments, too, vary from minimal fines to five years in prison.

APEDA, the Indian government's gatekeeper for exports, has stringent guidelines for beef export. Last year, APEDA introduced a requirement that exporters must prove that their beef was sourced from government-approved and registered abattoirs. But with a sizable Muslim and Christian population—14 percent and 2 percent respectively—that doesn't worship the cow's divinity, there is speculation that illegal cow beef is sneaking into the mix. "Meat is meat and it would be hard to tell if it came from a licensed slaughterhouse, municipal slaughterhouse, or export facility," says Joshipura.

India's rapidly growing beef industry is a political issue, especially during elections when the country is divided along cultural, religious, and political lines: Muslims and Hindus, left versus right, beef-eating Hindus versus non-beef eating Hindus. "Politicians take a stand on the issue just as they take a stand on any issue of public concern," says Joshipura. "A politician's position on the matter would determine how much support he or she would get and from whom."

When Narendra Modi, India's current Prime Minister, ran for office in 2014, one platform he ran on was criticizing the ruling Congress Party-led government's "Pink Revolution"—the nickname for India's rising beef exports. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) blamed the Congress Party for encouraging beef trade to woo India's 180 million Muslims. Modi promised to curb the industry, a promise he hasn't followed through with since he became Prime Minister last May.

As religious groups mourn the sacrilege of cow slaughter—urban, well-traveled Indians are developing a taste for beef.

To give Modi credit, putting the brakes on India's beef industry isn't as easy as it sounds. The lack of a comprehensive, uniform law regarding cow slaughter makes it easier for people to find ways to kill cows if they want to. It is estimated that almost two million cows are smuggled across a 2,400-mile poorly-patrolled border from India into Bangladesh every year. Inside India's borders, people dodge the law by smuggling cows to states where there are little or no penalties for cow slaughter. Rajhans says that India has about 3,600 legal slaughterhouses and 30,000 illegal ones, many of which slaughter cows.

The lucrativeness of the beef business is attracting people—including Hindus. "I have seen Hindus in the cow slaughtering business," Rajhans laments. "They are just not aware of their spiritual responsibilities, that they shouldn't kill cows." Two business opportunities in the beef industry, Rajhans explains, is the money from exporting meat to oil-rich Gulf countries and the political power held by India's Muslim population. The Congress Party is blamed by activists for its Muslim vote-mongering, as beef is a Muslim-dominated industry and beef sales doubled between 2007 and 2012 while the Congress Party was in power.

As if the issue of beef isn't divided enough, there is even disagreement amongst those who



oppose the beef industry. “Buffalo meat isn’t beef,” says Vinod Bansal, spokesperson for Vishva Hindu Parishad, a Hindu nationalist organization. “Only cow meat is beef and India doesn’t export that. And if a Hindu eats beef he or she cannot be called a Hindu.” Others like Mongia accept that a lot of Indian beef comes from cows, though it is difficult to say how much. “India’s ‘Pink Revolution’ may have happened mostly when the Congress was in power,” Mongia speculates. “But under Modi it has become worse.”

Beef exports have increased by 16 percent since Modi came into power. “It was just a ploy to get the vote,” says Rajhans. International anti-slaughter activists like PETA say that the

BJP’s push for a uniform, nationwide, cow slaughter ban itself is contradictory: The BJP touts milk as a revered cow product, encouraging the growth of the dairy industry. With 76 million cows, India is now the world’s largest milk producer producing 140 million tons of milk a year. Most cows, past their milk-producing age, end up being turned to leather and beef rather than living out their years in cow shelters—a retirement home of sorts for cows.

As animal-rights groups decry the terrible conditions in slaughterhouses and religious groups mourn the sacrilege of cow slaughter—urban, well-traveled Indians are developing a taste for beef. Many upmarket, chic, restaurants offer steaks on their menu—and the people ordering them aren’t always Muslim or Christian. While some Hindus might argue that the beef comes from buffalo, those who have already developed a taste for beef might not want to believe that there’s cow in their burgers. Does not knowing where beef comes from absolve a Hindu of eating cow meat? Even if so, it’s still likely supporting a booming (and illegal) cow-slaughter industry.



SENA DESAI GOPAL is a journalist covering science, culture, and travel. Her work has appeared in The Times of India, The Boston Globe, and Modern Farmer.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/02/selling-the-sacred-cow-indias-contentious-beef-industry/385359/>





From Mahabharata Anushashan parva – Chapter 51

Once upon a time there was a sage name Chyavan, who was a great Tapasvi and also the son of Bhrgu Rishi. Once he undertook a vow to remain under water for meditation. He wanted to give up attachment, anger, pride, pain, pleasure, sorrow etc. He was inside the water for 12 years and meditated. Seeing this austerity and nature of great soul all the living entities inside the water became his friends and had no fear from him. Once this great saint entered the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna rivers with great faith and humility. At times he would perform Samadhi under water and sometimes float on water. In this way, lot of time passed away.

Once a fisherman came there to catch fish. With the intention of catching the fish he threw the net. Coincidentally Chyavan rishi was caught in the net. However the fisherman was not aware that he has caught the Rishi in his net and so when he tried to pull the net, it was very heavy and so he thought that today he has got a big fish in his net. All fishermen together started pulling the net with full force and when the net came out on shore they saw that along with fishes Chyavan rishi has also been caught in net.

Seeing a Rishi caught in their net all the fishermen got frightened. They started begging for forgiveness with folded hands. Having being removed from water the fishes died after withering in pain. Seeing this scene the heart of Chyavan rishi melted with compassion. He said to the fishermen, “I will give up my life along with these fishes as we both were living together for long time. I cannot give up their company. Since they are now without consciousness, I will also become like them.

Hearing such statements from the sage the fishermen were trembling with fear, as they would become the cause of death of saintly person like Chyavan rishi. They told the sage to wait, and ran toward the king Nahusha and narrated the incident in detail. King Nahusha heard everything and was pleased that a sage of such great caliber i.e. Chyavan rishi has come to his kingdom to show some mercy. He thought this to be mercy of Supreme lord and went to meet the sage along with ministers and priests along with the fishermen. King immediately joined hands in front of him and worshiped him nicely and offered obeisances unto the sage Chyavan. Then thus satisfying him the king said, “Your servant is ready to carry out your order. Please order and be merciful.”

The sage said, "Today these fishermen had removed me from water along with these fishes with great effort. But seeing me caught in the net they have become greatly fearful and perturbed. They could not get much fish also today. How will their life go on? Please give them the right price of myself to these fishermen so that they can carry on with their life." At that time the king Nahusha said to the ministers, "Please give these fishermen 1000 gold coins as price for this sage." Hearing this sage said, "O King is my value only 1000 gold coins. Please decide the right amount of my value and give to the fishermen." Then Nahusha said to the ministers, "Please give these fishermen 1 lakh gold coins. Saying this



he enquired from the sage whether is this the right amount? The sage Chyavan replied, "Please don't limit me to only 1 lakh coins.

Please take advice from your ministers and priests and then decide my value." The king without discussing told the people to give the fishermen 1 crore gold coins. Sage again protested. King told that half his kingdom be given to fishermen. The sage said, "O king what to speak of half kingdom, even your full kingdom will not be equal to my value. Please consult your ministers, priests and sages etc to decide my value.

Hearing this king was mortified. He thus consulted his ministers and priests. At this time another forest dwelling muni who subsisted only on roots and fruits came near the king and spoke to him. O King don't be dejected. I will satisfy this Chyavan rishi and also tell the right value of this sage.

Please listen to me carefully as I never speak lies.. I always speak truth and so have no doubts.

King said, "O lords, I am in great danger. Because of my actions, a great sage is ready to

give up his life. If you can tell me the right value of this Chyavan rishi then I will be grateful. Please save my kingdom my family and me from this great danger. Hearing this that Sage spoke, "Brahman's and cows belong to same family but appear differently. Brahman's take the form of mantras and cows take form of offering in yajnas. We cannot estimate the value of Cows and Brahman's. Therefore, you give a cow as value for this Chyavan sage.



Hearing the statements of this forest dwelling muni king and his priests became overjoyed. They quickly went to Chyavan rishi and told him that we have fixed cow as equal in value to you, which we will give to anglers. Now please get up and desist from giving up life. Chyavan replied, "Yes, you have purchased me at right price. Surely, there is no wealth comparable to Holy cows in this world. Great glories are sung chanting and glorifying holy cow's qualities and names. Performance of above activities grant us supreme destination. They bless us with laxmi, and they are not tinged with sins.

Cows always grant men grains and demigods sacrificial offerings. All sacrifices are dependent on cows and cows are the sacrificial mouths. They hold divine nectar (amruta) which is free from all faults and on being milked; they give only nectar (milk). Nectar is sheltered on cows. Whole world bows in front of them. Where ever a group of cows sits and breaths fearlessly that place increases in beauty and is freed from all sins. Cows are steps to heaven. Cows are worshipped even in heaven. They are demigoddesses who can fulfill all our desires. There is no one as great as they are and no one can describe them fully.

Saying thus the sage Chyavan became silent. That time the anglers requested the sage to accept the cow that they have received from the king. Sage accepted the cow and said that by donating a cow all your sins have been destroyed. Now soon all of you will attain heaven along with these sins. While the sage was saying, thus the fishes and anglers started ascending to heaven. Seeing them ascend to heaven king Nahusha was astonished. Then the sages who had suggested the values of cow and Chayavan muni asked the king to ask for blessings. The King asked that he should always walk on codes of religion and be engaged in devotional service. The king received this blessing and then worshiped all the sages.

<http://mgdas.com/2010/06/mother-cow-poison-toxin-destroyer/#more-284>

“ja ghar tulsi aru gay, ta ghar vaidya kabhu na jaye”

- a house that has a Tulsi (sacred basil) plant and a cow is never visited by a doctor. It is said: jivantu avadghnyah ta me vishasya dushanih. This means – let cows live without slaughter for their whole life-they remove poison and toxins. In ayurveda, poisonous herbs are purified by cow urine only.

“go mutre tridinam sthapyaya visham ten vishudhyati” – use of cow urine for three days cleanses poison.

The following is a speciality of mother cow: If by chance some poisonous or harmful material enters the cow through food, she absorbs it in her flesh. She does not let it go into cow urine, cow dung or milk or even if it gets there, she releases it in a very small quantity.

These results have been compared with those of other animals by feeding them various items and then testing milk and urine. Cow urine and dung was always pure and remove toxins. Cow milk is certainly anti-toxic. Cow urine is included in “panchgavya”.

“Panchgavya” is said to be a cure for all diseases. Panchagavya is made up of five cow products viz. milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung.

“yatvagasthi gatam papam dehe tishthti mamke prasnat panchgavyasya dahasagnirivendhnam”

Translation : From skin to bones, what ever sins (diseases) are in my body, are destroyed by panchagavya just as fire destroys fuel.

<http://mgdas.com/2010/06/mother-cow-poison-toxin-destroyer/#more-284>



Updated: March 27, 2015 02:19 IST

Maharashtra beef ban law: First case registered in Malegaon

In the first case reported after the amended law banning beef slaughter in Maharashtra came into force, police on Thursday booked three persons for allegedly slaughtering two calves in Malegaon town of Nashik district.

Working on a tip-off, police seized two heads of slaughtered calves and around 150 kg of beef after raiding an abandoned shack in the Bajrangwadi area under Azad Nagar police station. The accused, Hamid alias Lendi, Rashid alias Pandya and Asif Talathi, are absconding. A search operation has been launched to nab them, a police officer said.

The three have been booked under the Maharashtra Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act, which came into place on March 4, 2015. Under the amended law, even the slaughter of bulls, calves and bullocks is a criminal offense liable with punishment up to five years imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000. Cow slaughter is banned in the State since 1976.

Though police expects to get more details about the origins of the meat after it arrests the accused, samples of the seized beef were sent to Mumbai for laboratory tests.

The case has shed focus on the new law banning beef in the State which came into force after President Pranab Mukherjee gave his assent to the Maharashtra Animal Preservation (Amendment) Bill, which had been pending since 1995 during the previous Sena-BJP rule. The current BJP-Sena government has cracked down on the slaughter of bulls and bullocks.

Social media burst into criticism and taunted the new law in the aftermath of this case. "Is this democratic? It's just like making every religion follow them. Just b'cz Hindus dont eat beef does'nt mean others wont!!" tweeted one user.

Some beef traders fear that the new law would lead to an influx in smuggling of beef while also putting undue pressure on those who legally sell buffalo, which is out of the new law's purview. Abdul Qureshi, of the Beef Traders Association, said while the State was aggressive in implementing the new law, it cared little for the interest of those involved in the trade legally.

After the slaughter of bulls and bullocks was banned, traders in the State boycotted sale of buffalo meat as a mark of protest and solidarity. "The intention of the State is not clear. Though it is okay to nab illegal meat supply, given the atmosphere created by the State around beef, we fear that even the legal meat (buffalo) risks being told illegal," said Mr. Qureshi.

"We have boycotted the slaughter of buffalo but nobody has come to us asking us to continue the trade, since it is legal. It shows the State does not care," he said.

Absconding

The accused, Hamid, alias Lendi, Rashid, alias Pandya, and Asif Talathi, are absconding. A search has been launched, a police officer said.

They have been booked under the Maharashtra Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act. Under the amended law, even the slaughter of bulls, calves and bullocks is a criminal offence attracting up to five years' imprisonment and a Rs. 10,000 fine. Cow slaughter has been banned in the State since 1976.

“Is it democratic?”

The arrests and the new law came under criticism in social media. “Is this democratic? It's just like making every religion follow them. Just because Hindus don't eat beef, doesn't mean others wont,” one user tweeted.

Some beef traders fear that the new law would lead to smuggling of beef, putting pressure on those who legally sell buffalo, which is out of the new law's purview.

Abdul Qureshi of the Beef Traders' Association said that while the State was aggressive in implementing the new law, it cared little for those legally involved in the trade.

