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# COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

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



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**It is Illegal to Cage Birds**





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Beauty Without Cruelty  
is a way of life which causes  
no creature of land, sea or air  
terror, torture or death

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# From my Desk...

## Weapons sold Online

In September 2021 BWC sent e-mails to the CEOs of many online sellers of slingshots/catapults/*gulel* and air-guns/rifles & bullets pointing out that they were weapons used for hunting and can obviously cause injury and loss of lives to both wild and domesticated animals and birds, even to humans if targeted. They can not be considered toys or even fall under the category of sports. BWC also requested that they not sell books on hunting because they impart knowledge on how and where to find wild life in order to kill them. We drew their attention to the fact that by selling such items it attracts the provisions of the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972 and the seller becomes a part to abetment.

BWC sent a detailed e-mail appeal to Amazon, Snapdeal, Flipkart, ShopClues, Bloon Toys, Desertcart, 24seven India, Ubuy India, Order2India, Cart2India, My Web Store Shopping, Eassymall, etc. requesting



Catapult sold on [amazon.in](http://amazon.in).



**White-eyed buzzard injured by a catapult in the Panje wetlands of Uran, Maharashtra.**

*Photo courtesy: indiatiimes.com*

them to stop selling these items. We also alerted the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Director of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry followed by the Animal Welfare Board of India.

Desertcart immediately replied: "Will raise that to our IT team to have it removed on the website." Ubuy's reply was also greatly appreciated: "We already informed the concerned team to remove the products which are mentioned in the letter with immediate effect and will ensure that no seller will be allowed to sell such products on our website in the future."

The biggest offender Amazon responded that as per their policy they did not allow the sale and listing of such products, but in order to stop it asked BWC to send URLs of those products that

were objectionable! BWC sent them 17 pages full of URLs. The reply received from the Counsel for Amazon Seller Services Pvt Ltd states among several other things that "Our Client has, in accordance with its policy and obligations under law, reviewed the 142 URLs that you have shared vide Your Email. You are hereby informed that on the basis of this review, our Client has taken down a total of 21 product listings, out of the 142 identified and provided by you, which met the bar of restriction as per our Client's policy."

## Rat Traps

On getting to know Godrej Consumer Products were the main manufacturers of extremely cruel HIT products like gels, glue traps, etc and were earning blood money by marketing them, BWC sent them a copy of the Animal Welfare Board of India advisory dated 16 August 2020 addressed to Chief Secretaries of all States/Union Territories Governments, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade and the Indian Pest Control Association to issue strict directions to ban the use of glue traps since it was in violation of Section 11(1) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. We hope the company will stop ignoring our government rules.



**The rodents die of starvation, suffocation, panic-induced heart attack or while trying to break free. Photo courtesy: youtube.com**

## Draft Food Safety and Standards (Vegan Foods) Regulations, 2021

We are pleased to inform our members that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued draft regulations for vegan foods and defined it as follows:

"Vegan Food" means those foods or food ingredients that have not made use of any ingredients, additives, and processing aids of animal origin including milk and milk products, fish, poultry and meat, egg or egg products, honey or honey bee products, materials or insect origin like silk, dyes, chitin/chitosan, etc. or ingredients that are clarified using animal sourced products e.g. bone char used in sugar bleaching, isinglass in clarifying beer, etc."

BWC has suggested a different user-friendly symbol to the one FSSAI has asked for display as a mark on vegan foods. The 60-day period for suggestions got over on 05 November 2021 so their response was awaited at the time of going to press.

# It is Illegal to Cage Birds

*Remember the person who buys and flaunts a caged bird at home is as much responsible as the person who sells the poor bird, and before that the person who has trapped or bred the bird says Khurshid Bhathena*

**O**n 22 July 2021 the Animal Welfare Board of India sent its third Advisory (the earlier two were of 28 October 2011 and 06 May 2013) to The Chief Secretary, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and the Director General of Police of all States/UTs requesting them all to ensure that the ban on caging birds was implemented and to take steps to wrap up illegal bird markets. The operative part of the judgement of the Hon'ble High Court of Gujarat dated 12 May 2011 was stated:

"This Court is conscious of the fact that this court is dealing with the interim custody of the muddamal birds/animals but in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case and the manner in which the birds/animals are kept in the cages and looking to the pain suffered to the birds/animals, this court is of the opinion that the only order which can be passed in the interest of justice would be enlarge the birds/animals free in the open sky/air. As such the learned Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate had rightly passed an order directing to enlarge the birds free in the open sky, however, the Revisional court, without assigning any reasons, had set aside such a direction. Even section 451 of the Code of Criminal Procedure confers powers upon the Court for custody and disposal of the property pending trial and the Court may make such order as it think fit for the proper custody of such property, pending conclusion of the inquiry or trial and if otherwise expedient



**Birds of a feather, compressed together. Photo courtesy: saveus.in**

to do so, Court may, after recording such evidence as it thinks necessary order it to be sold or otherwise dispose of. Considering the aforesaid provision and considering the fact that if birds in question are not ordered to be disposed of by way of enlarging them free in the air/sky, in that case looking to the hot weather, there are all chances that the birds may die. Under the circumstances also, it will be expedient and in their interest to enlarge the birds free. Under the circumstances the order passed by the revisional court to that extent deserves to be quashed and set aside and the order passed by the learned Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate directing to enlarge the birds/animals in the open sky deserves to be restored."

Furthermore, the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 07 May 2014 had also recognised the five fundamental rights of the animals including the right to live with dignity, and announced 12 stringent measures/directives for the Government and other implementing authorities to stop

cruelty to animals and birds, one of which stated “The Governments would see that if the provisions of the PCA Act (Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 as amended in 1982) and the declarations and the directions issued by the Court are not properly and effectively complied with, disciplinary action be taken against the erring officials so that the purpose and object of PCA Act could be achieved”. Without doubt, the caging of birds also violates the five fundamental freedoms as stated in this judgement: freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition, freedom from fear and distress, freedom from physical and thermal discomfort, freedom from pain, injury and disease, and freedom to express normal patterns of behaviour.

Moreover, the Hon’ble Judge of the Delhi High Court in his order dated 15 May 2015 was “of the view that running the trade of birds is in violation of the rights of the birds. They deserve sympathy. Nobody is caring as to whether they have been inflicting cruelty or not despite of settled law that birds have a fundamental right to fly and cannot be caged and will have to be set free in the sky. Actually, they are meant for the same. But on the other

hand, they are exported illegally in foreign countries without availability of proper food, water, medical aid and other basic amenities required as per law. Birds have fundamental rights including the right to live with dignity and they cannot be subjected to cruelty by anyone including claim made by the respondent. Therefore, I am clear in mind that all the birds have fundamental rights to fly in the sky and all human beings have no right to keep them in small cages for the purposes of their business or otherwise.”

Lastly on 31 May 2019 the Punjab and Haryana High Court accorded the status of “legal person or entity” to animals granting them the “corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person” adding that animals can not be treated as “objects” or “property” and are “entitled to justice” signing off the verdict with the motto “live and let live”. Many of the directions in the verdict had been passed on 04 July 2018 by a division bench of Justices for Uttarakhand by issuing the following mandatory direction: “The entire animal kingdom including avian and aquatic are declared as legal entities having a distinct persona with corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person...”



**Trapped to be sold and often illegally exported, always exploited and mistreated. Photo courtesy: thehindu.com**

Remember the person who buys and flaunts a caged bird at home is as much responsible as the person who sells the poor bird, and before that the person who has trapped or bred the bird.

It is unfortunate that despite so much sound legal backing, birds are blatantly trapped, traded and caged. Or bred in captivity and caged. It can easily stop if the police and wildlife authorities take strict action against the offenders.



*Khurshid Bhatena is a Trustee and Honorary Secretary of BWC-India*

# Food Fortification

In 2019 fortification of rice with Vitamin B12, Iron and Folic acid was introduced in 15 states. As of 2021 Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh had started distributing this fortified rice.

Since the Government of India is going ahead with fortification of foods and it seems that by 2024 it will be mandatory to fortify rice, BWC approached the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) requesting that all fortificants, micronutrients, premixes etc. be “only from plant sources” as stated for Iron and Vitamin D under their Standards for Fortification. (Reference FSSAI directions dated 31 May 2017 in response to BWC’s request restricting the use of heme-iron as a source of iron used as a fortificant.)

BWC is concerned about other fortificants that would be utilised, particularly Vitamin A, Folic Acid, Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 and B12 that could very well be of animal origin. Lab-produced or synthesised fortificants and micronutrients which will be imported from one of the five international corporations, can still be of animal origin because the source of every thing can only be animal, plant or mineral.

We hope in the interest of acceptance of food fortification by India’s veg consumers who on religious or ethical grounds do not consume even a small amount of non-veg as an ingredient, FSSAI makes it mandatory for all fortificants, micronutrients and premixes (be they for rice, wheat, edible oil, salt, milk or any thing else) to be of non-animal origin.

## Why Rice Fortification is Not just Unnecessary but Potentially Risky

India intends to universally fortify its rice supply for the food subsidy programs by 2024. The motivation is that the combinations of normal foods in the Indian diet are inadequate to meet the daily iron requirement. And that this should be done mandatorily. However, facts must be separated from fiction and myths busted.

### **The first myth: Is universal rice fortification required?**

Contemporary evidence indicates that iron deficiency is neither rampant nor omnipresent and therefore, does not require a universal (mandatory) solution. The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), updated the Nutrient Requirements for Indians in 2020, with two noteworthy corrections: first, that the iron requirement is 40-50% lower than previously thought, and second, the correct metric for population intakes is the Estimated Average Requirement instead of the Recommended

Dietary Allowance (maximal of requirement range). Estimates from the National Sample Survey Office data reveal that in women a daily dietary iron gap occurs only in the lowest wealth quintile and the deficit (5 mg/day) can be managed by a more diverse diet and behavioural changes like avoiding tea with meals. Importantly, even in this lowest wealth quintile group, men are not at high risk.

### **The second myth: Is the high anaemia prevalence inflated?**

First, we have been using a surrogate method of haemoglobin measurement (from blood obtained by a convenient finger prick) to diagnose anaemia. The more precise venous blood sample (taken from a vein) should be used. Global and Indian studies reveal that finger-prick blood records lower haemoglobin (~1 g/dl), and using the recommended venous blood would halve the anaemia prevalence. Second, we rely on WHO haemoglobin cut-

offs to estimate anaemia burden. However, emerging global and Indian evidence indicate that this cut-off might be too high.

### **The third myth: Fortification requires no behavioural modifications**

Proponents of fortification call it a panacea because it requires no change in food consumption behaviours by the beneficiary. This may not be true, because there are 1000s of varieties of rice grown in India, with different size, shape and colour. The fortified rice kernel has to exactly match the colour and shape of the unfortified rice kernels it is mixed into and not float or sink differently during cooking. If not, the unmatched grains may simply be picked out and discarded. The sheer diversity of rice kernels and varieties may defeat this process - unless the diversity of cultivated rice grains is reduced, which is not desirable from the biodiversity perspective.

### **The fourth myth (and despair): Diet diversity will never occur in India**

A diet with 250-300 grams of diversified cereals, plus green leafy vegetables will easily deliver most current nutrient requirements (including iron). Changing farming practices with community involvement, as shown empirically in Koraput and Wardha, can increase nutrient-dense crop production and cultivation of diverse fruits and vegetables to improve dietary diversity manifold. This diet can meet almost all micronutrient (including iron) requirements. These local, community driven solutions are feasible and safe, compared to the industrial, unsustainable sledgehammer approach of chemical fortification.

It is an oxymoron that fortification will complement and co-exist with dietary diversification. The NIN food plate for Indians stipulates that a diverse and healthy plate of food contain no more than 40% of the total calories from cereals, of which only a fraction should be rice. Yet, the rice fortification is likely to instruct people to eat 250-350 gm fortified rice/day: whither dietary diversity?

### **The fifth myth: Rice fortification will successfully prevent anaemia**

Cereal grains inhibit iron absorption. Small wonder then, that a Cochrane meta-analysis of 17 trials of rice fortification concluded that "... fortification of rice with iron ... may make little or no difference in the risk of having anaemia or ...iron deficiency".

### **The sixth myth: Iron fortification is safe**

The belief that fortification delivers only tiny amounts of iron daily, which is harmless, is false! Eating 250-350 gm of fortified rice can deliver up to 10 mg of iron daily, which is 90% of a man's and 70% of a woman's requirement. This is in addition to the native iron in the diet and ongoing public health interventions (pharmacological supplementation under Anaemia Mukht Bharat programme and double fortified salt in some states)! The apocalypse is not in the deficiency, but in the risk of excess iron intake. The risk of diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol are all magnified with increased iron, which is also associated with oxidative stress and colonization of inimical gut microbes.

### **The reality: A gentler counter-narrative**

We need gentler, safer, long-term and sustainable solutions that involve the community, and stimulate diet diversification, especially with simultaneously ongoing initiatives to increase iron intakes. Sustainability comes from cost: the rice fortification expense alone is ₹2600 Crores/annum – disputably a redundant and wasteful expenditure with potential risks. We argue that there is no case for universal rice fortification. We must resist the fascination with technology and universality and go local (solutions) for global (problems).



*This piece appeared in the Sunday Times of India, October 17, 2021. It contains revealing information from Dr Anura Kurpad, Professor at St John's Medical College, and Prof Harshpal S Sachdev, a senior consultant at Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Science and Research.*

# Fact, not Fancy *Amber and Ambergris*

“Why is there a sudden spike in ambergris seizures in India?” asks Nirmal Nischit

**A** mber used in jewellery is transparent or translucent yellowish-orange coloured fossilized tree resin containing insects that were trapped as a natural phenomena. The semi-solid resin is discharged by pine trees growing on land or in swamps to block cracks caused by chewing insects. To protect themselves, the trees exude resin thus sealing and sterilising injuries caused to their barks, and in the process entomb little critters.

In French *amber gris* means grey coloured fossilized tree resin. However ambergris is a solid waxy substance produced in the intestines of sperm whales. It could be black, grey, different shades of brown, or yellowish vaguely resembling the tree resin amber. That’s how ambergris got its name even though it was later found to have originated from sperm whales.

Smooth and shiny squid beaks are always seen in ambergris because it is formed to protect the whale from sharp objects which need to be expelled. The strong smell of this intestinal secretion that comes out of either end of a whale is surprisingly neither that of vomit or faeces, and its smell changes as it dries.

## Demand for Ambergris

Whales are now protected worldwide, but the ever growing demand for ambergris continues. Commercial whaling ended in 1986 prior to which bloody harpooning of sperm whales occurred for ambergris (found in stomachs of dead sperm whales) and other products such as spermaceti and sperm whale oil used as a machine lubricant, and for whale meat of course.



**Resin discharged by a tree (left) that hardens and forms amber and amber with trapped ant (right).**

**Photos courtesy: pinterest.com and © Anders L. Damgaard**

Beauty Without Cruelty had also campaigned towards achieving the international ban on whaling and used to recommend the use of jojoba oil in place of sperm whale oil. The International Whaling Commission kept advising quotas to be reduced. Around 1977 we got several institutions like the Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, Maharashtra’s Agricultural Universities at Parbhani and Rahuri, and the Avatar Meher Baba Trust at Meherabad near Ahmednagar, to successfully grow jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*) seed in the hope that India would stop importing sperm oil and use jojoba oil instead.

During the 35 years since the ban Japan, Norway and Iceland have killed nearly 40,000 whales for their meat, oil, blubber and cartilage used in pharmaceuticals and health supplements. In addition, deliberate hunting of small whales and dolphins continues to take place around the world for food, bait, currency or supposed traditional medicines and charms.

## In demand for...

Ambergris is best known for its use as a fixative in perfumes alongside others of animal origin like musk/*kasturi* (deer and musk rat), civet/*gandhamarjara* (cat), operculum/*nakhla* (mullosk), castoreum (beaver and rat) and hyraceum (mammal resembling a guinea pig).

The Chinese use ambergris not only in fragrances, but in medicine and as aphrodisiacs.

*Ambar* as ambergris is called in India, has for centuries been utilised as *agnijara* in Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine, and in Homeopathy as *ambra grisea*.

Ambergris has been historically used worldwide as an ingredient in food and drink, and ambergris-laced sugar fetches a high price.

## Here, There and Everywhere

In January 2020, 5 kgs of ambergris was washed ashore at Devanampattinam in Cuddalore district, and was taken over by the Fisheries as well as Forest Departments of Tamil Nadu and proposed to be destroyed.

Only 6 months earlier, after a gap of a year, in June 2019 two persons had been arrested and ₹1.90 crore worth of ambergris had been seized in Mumbai. Six seizures also took place in Mumbai and Thane till mid-2021.

Then in May 2021 ambergris weighing 5.3 kg valued at ₹10 lakh per kg in India, but worth ₹7 crore in the international Arab and Chinese markets, was seized from 3 persons who were detained by the Ahmedabad Police.

Just 2 months later in July 2021, officials of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) Chennai, along with local forest and police personnel arrested

an 8-member gang trying to sell 8.25 kgs of ambergris worth about ₹8 crore at Narsaraopet in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.

₹30 crore worth of 18 kgs ambergris was also seized by the WCCB during July 2021 in Chettuva (a coastal village of Kerala) from 3 persons.

A month later in August 2021 the Pune forest division arrested 6 persons for dealing in 3 kgs of ambergris worth ₹3.5 crore.

Also in August 2021 the WCCB were responsible for the biggest ever seizure of ambergris weighing 80 kgs in Bengaluru for which 5 persons were arrested.

Around the same time 4 persons belonging to a Kerala-based gang were nabbed in Mangadu, near Chennai, for attempting to sell ambergris worth ₹22 crore; 3 persons near Thoothukudi with ambergris worth ₹23 crore; and, 9 persons near Thiruporur with ambergris valued at ₹13 crore.

Again in September 2021, 11 kgs of ambergris was confiscated from 4 persons in Bengaluru. Coincidentally on the same day 2 persons were arrested in Mumbai for peddling nearly 6 kgs of ambergris in Mumbai.



**Sperm whale ambergris worth ₹80 crore confiscated by the Central Crime Branch. Photo courtesy: thehindu.com**

A fortnight later 2 persons from the Lakshadweep Islands who were trying to sell 1.4 kgs of ambergris valued at more than ₹1.4 crore at Kochi, were arrested by the WCCB and officials of the Kerala Forest Department.

On 25 October 2021 the Tamil Nadu Forest Department officials on a tip that a gang was trying to sell ambergris in local and international markets, laid a trap at Tiruvarur and seized 8 kgs of ambergris worth ₹8 crore and arrested 2 persons who were remanded at Nannilam prison.

## Sudden Smuggling

Why is there a sudden spike of ambergris seizures in India? Surely many more tried to sell and sold ambergris undetected. Ambergris can, thanks to smugglers from India's coastal belt using ships, end up any where in the world like in Dubai or Europe where the demand is said to be currently high.

Officials from coastal Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka felt that the sudden spike in ambergris seizures was because of greater awareness among the coastal fishing community resulting from stories in the media of fishermen whose lives are said to have favourably changed overnight on finding ambergris, as well as a slowdown in international trade due to flight restrictions after Covid-19, however, there were few buyers within India.

# Attacked for being “Radical”

**T**his is how a deceitful journalist at a conference twisted my innocent words. “Mr Wollen, I’m surprised a man of your standing would say that:

Meat is murder.

Livestock production is unethical.

There will be no peace until we stop killing animals.

Industry is unattractive.

Animals are like human children.

Cannot you see how offensive this is to our “conservative rural” audience”.

This was my “diplomatic” counterpunch. “If you are going to quote me, please do so honestly.

“I did say: The commandment “Thou shalt not kill” applies to the murder of any living being. It was inscribed in the human breast long before it was proclaimed from Sinai. “As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields.” But that was Leo Tolstoy.

“I did say: “The roots of cruelty are not strong – just widespread. But a time will come when inhumanity protected by custom will succumb to humanity championed by thought. A man is ethical only when all life is sacred to him”. But that was Albert Schweitzer, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

“I did say: “As long as we kill animals, there will never be peace. It is only one step to the concentration camps of Hitler and Stalin. There will be no justice as long as a man with a knife can destroy someone, simply because they are weaker than him.” But that was Isaac Singer, a Nobel Prize Winner.

“And yes, I admit I did have something to say about animals and children. “The wolf will lie down with the lamb, the leopard with the young goat; the young lion with the young ones of the herd; and a little child will lead after them.” But that came from the Prophet Isaiah.

“And no, I did not say anything about greed and ambition. That was not me. That was Jesus. Blame him. He said: “Behold the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. King Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these”. And for good measure, he added “Whatever you do to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me!”

“So, are you, as a “journalist”, suggesting that your “conservative rural” audience is offended by Nobel Prize Winners and the Prophets? Or

should I just go home – and burn my books? I seem to recall this was a strategy favoured by Pol Pot.”

Well, the journalist was speechless. He attacked me for being “radical”.

 Philip Wollen is an Australian philanthropist who did his schooling in India. His Winsome Constance Kindness organisation promotes kindness towards all other living beings. He addresses international audiences on the benefits of turning vegan.

## Compassion

**O**ur member Purnima Toolsidass sent the following couplets on Compassion for **Compassionate Friend**.

This reminded us that our late member K S Satagopan had written a comprehensive article on Tiruvalluvar in 1993. We are therefore reprinting it following the couplets received now.

Gems from Tirukkural, a 2500-years-old-Tamil classic with 1330 couplets composed by the Maharishi Tiruvalluvar as translated by Kannan:

- *There exists this stupendous beauty called compassion; and therefore, the world exists.*
- *It is compassion that keeps the world functioning as it should; there are those who lack it, and they burden the earth.*
- *Of what use is a tune that can't suit any song?*
- *Of what use are eyes, which have no compassion?*
- *An eye that is not abound with compassion, what purpose is it serving on the face, feigning existence?*
- *Eyes are adorned by compassion; but for it, they would be considered wounds.*
- *Trees rooted to the land they resemble, those though born with eyes, don't use them to be compassionate.*
- *Those who lack compassion have no eyes; who truly have eyes can't lack compassion.*
- *The world belongs to those who do their duty unfalteringly, while being compassionate.*
- *Being compassionate and patient, even with those who hurt us, is a quality, most admirable.*
- *Even after seeing poison being poured, they will consume it and converse cordially, they who seek to be captivatingly civilized and compassionate.*



## Tiruvalluvar on abstaining from Flesh and Non-killing

K S Satagopan

Tiruvalluvar was a great Tamil poet and moralist who undoubtedly ranks amongst the best of great men of India and whose work KURAL is considered to be one of the literary and ethical masterpieces of the world.

Nothing is known with certainty about the date of the KURAL and the life of the poet. Researches by various scholars lead to different periods lying between the 2nd and the 6th Century A.D. He is said to have been a weaver by profession. The greatest virtues to his mind were simple kindness, truthfulness, sincerity and harmlessness to all life. Tradition tells us that when he died his body was according to his express desire exposed in the open air outside the town to be eaten by scavenger birds.

The KURAL consists of 133 chapters of 10 couplets each, in the 'Kural metre' from which it gets its name. These couplets are models of terseness and vividness. These 1330 couplets are divided into three parts dealing respectively with Virtue, Wealth and Love — the first three of the four 'objects of life' with which Indian thinkers dealt with, the fourth being Salvation or Moksha. Tiruvalluvar was mainly concerned with practical things and he may have believed that a virtuous life cannot but lead to 'salvation'. The whole work is unsectarian in nature. It is evident from his work that the poet believed that ethical norms or standards like 'respect for all life' are independent of all circumstances.

It is under part I "VIRTUE" that we find the chapters on 'Abstaining from Flesh' and 'Non-Killing'. The poet's strong conviction

is borne by his couplets themselves. But the fact that he chose to write a separate chapter on abstaining from flesh when he could have as well treated the topic under Non-Killing is very instructive. Given below are authorised translations of these couplets. The brief explanatory notes that follow some of them within parentheses are based on authorised Tamil commentaries.

### Chapter 26 ABSTAINING FROM FLESH

1. How can he be possessed of kindness, who to increase his own flesh, eats the flesh of other creatures. (As flesh-eating involves killing, it is opposed to kindness and so will not be indulged in by the man who has that grace.)
2. As those possess no property who do not take care of it, so those possess no kindness who feed on flesh. (A man loses his property by not taking care of it. Similarly, a man loses the benefit of kindness - the vital spiritual element in him - by feeding on flesh.)
3. Like the (murderous) mind of him who carries a weapon (in his hand), the mind of him who feasts with pleasure on the body of another (creature), has no regard for goodness. (The mind of a flesh-eater is like the mind of a man whose only motive is to kill with the weapons that he carries.)
4. If it be asked what is kindness and what its opposite, the answer would be preservation (non-killing) and destruction (killing) of life; and therefore it is not right to feed on the flesh (obtained by taking away life).
5. Not to eat flesh contributes to the continuance of life; therefore if a man eats flesh, hell will not open its mouth (to let him escape out, after he has once fallen in). (This and the next couplet refute the argument of those who maintain that

the sinner is he who kills and not the one who eats).

6. If the world does not destroy life for the purpose of eating, then no one would sell flesh for the sake of money.
7. If men should come to know that flesh is nothing but the unclean ulcer of a body, let them abstain from eating it. (This is to stress that flesh eating is degrading from the hygiene point of view also.)
8. The wise, who have freed themselves from mental delusion, will not eat the flesh which has been severed from an animal. (One who is within his senses will not eat flesh which has been obtained by severing the head of an animal.)
9. Not to kill and eat (the flesh of) an animal, is better than the pouring forth of ghee etc., in a thousand sacrifices. (It should be remembered that not all sacrifices - religious rites for production of good - involve killing of animals. See 33.8.)
10. All creatures will join their hands together, and worship him who has never taken away life, nor eaten flesh. (It is made clear that 'Abstaining from Flesh' cannot itself be a virtue apart from 'Non-Killing' or vice versa. A recent commentator says that the poet may have had in his mind the Buddhists who allowed a man to eat flesh provided he did not kill.)

### CHAPTER 33 NON-KILLING

1. Never to destroy life is the sum of all virtuous conduct. The destruction of life leads to every evil.

2. The chief of all (the virtues) which authors have been summed up, is the partaking of food that has been shared with others, and the preservation of the manifold life of other creatures.

(The word 'others' in the phrase 'that has been shared with others' should be taken to mean 'other living beings'.)

3. Not to destroy life is an incomparably (great) good; next to it in goodness ranks freedom from falsehood.
4. Good path is that which considers how it may avoid killing any creature. (Good path refers to the good path for attaining Mukthi.)
5. Of all those who, fearing the permanence of earthly births, have abandoned desire, he is the chief who, fearing (the guilt of) murder, considers how he may avoid the destruction of life.
6. Yama, the destroyer of life, will not attack the life of him, who acts under the determination of never destroying life.
7. Let no one do that which should destroy the life of another, although he should by doing so, lose his own life. (One should avoid killing even when one is attacked to be killed.)
8. The advantage which might flow from destroying life in sacrifice, is dishonorable to the wise (who renounced the world) even although it should be said to be productive of a great good.
9. Men who destroy life are base men, in the estimation of those who know the nature of such meanness.
10. (The wise) will say that men of diseased bodies, who live in degradation and in poverty, are those who separated the life from the body of animals (in a former birth).

# Vegan Recipe

## Chickpeas and Jaggery

**C**hickpeas are the most consumed legumes in the world. They are extremely high in protein and very nutritious.

A combination of chickpeas and jaggery is said to be a powerhouse of protein and carbohydrates that is not only tasty, but helps boost ones immunity because it is loaded with antioxidants and minerals like zinc and selenium. It assists in strengthening muscles because jaggery is a rich source of potassium that boosts metabolism too. It improves memory thanks to Vitamin B6 content in chickpeas. When consumed with the magnesium of chickpeas, the glycolic acid of jaggery boosts anti-aging properties, thus reducing wrinkles and resulting in glowing skin. Lastly, the phosphorus content in chickpeas helps teeth become stronger.

Jaggery/*gur* is made in rural areas from sugarcane juice and should ideally be dark in colour. The whiter it is the more caustic soda, sodium bicarbonate, zinc formaldehyde sulphoxylate (harmful – used by the textile industry), sodium hydrophosphide (also harmful) or even cheap detergent is added, but if calcium carbonate (shell/lime origin) is used, it not only adds weight but turns non-veg. Vegetable clarifiers are obviously better. (Vidhyanjali has for years been selling jaggery under BWC's *Ahinsa* brand.)

### Susiyam



#### Ingredients

250 grams chickpeas/*chana dal*

250 grams jaggery/*gur* powder

¼ cup coconut grated

3 cardamom/*elaichi* pods,  
coarsely ground

½ cup flour/*maida* or rice flour

Water

Oil - for deep frying or air frying

#### Healthier options:

Rice flour in place of *maida*.

Air fryer instead of deep frying.

#### Preparation

Soak *chana dal* overnight.

Pressure cook for 4 whistles till soft.

Add jaggery powder, coconut and cardamom.

Mix well on low flame.

Make a runny batter of the flour and water.

Make lemon sized balls of the dal mixture.

Heat oil.

Dip each dal ball into the batter  
and fry till golden brown.

Drain excess oil. Or else use an air fryer.

Serve hot with rice *chaklis*.

**Do visit [www.bwcindia.org/Web/Recipes/Recipesindex.html](http://www.bwcindia.org/Web/Recipes/Recipesindex.html) for an assortment of Beauty Without Cruelty's tested and tasted, healthy and delicious vegan recipes.**

# The Story of a Bird hit with a Catapult...



His injured wife, falls and cries for help...



he responds with love and compassion...



...is shocked



...that his beloved is dead.



He mourns for her...



...is heartbroken with grief

**The boy who randomly aimed at the bird with a catapult was to blame.**

**BANNED**



**Trapping, transporting and trading**



**Taming and caging**

**Not only are these activities ILLEGAL  
– they are cruel and traumatise birds**



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