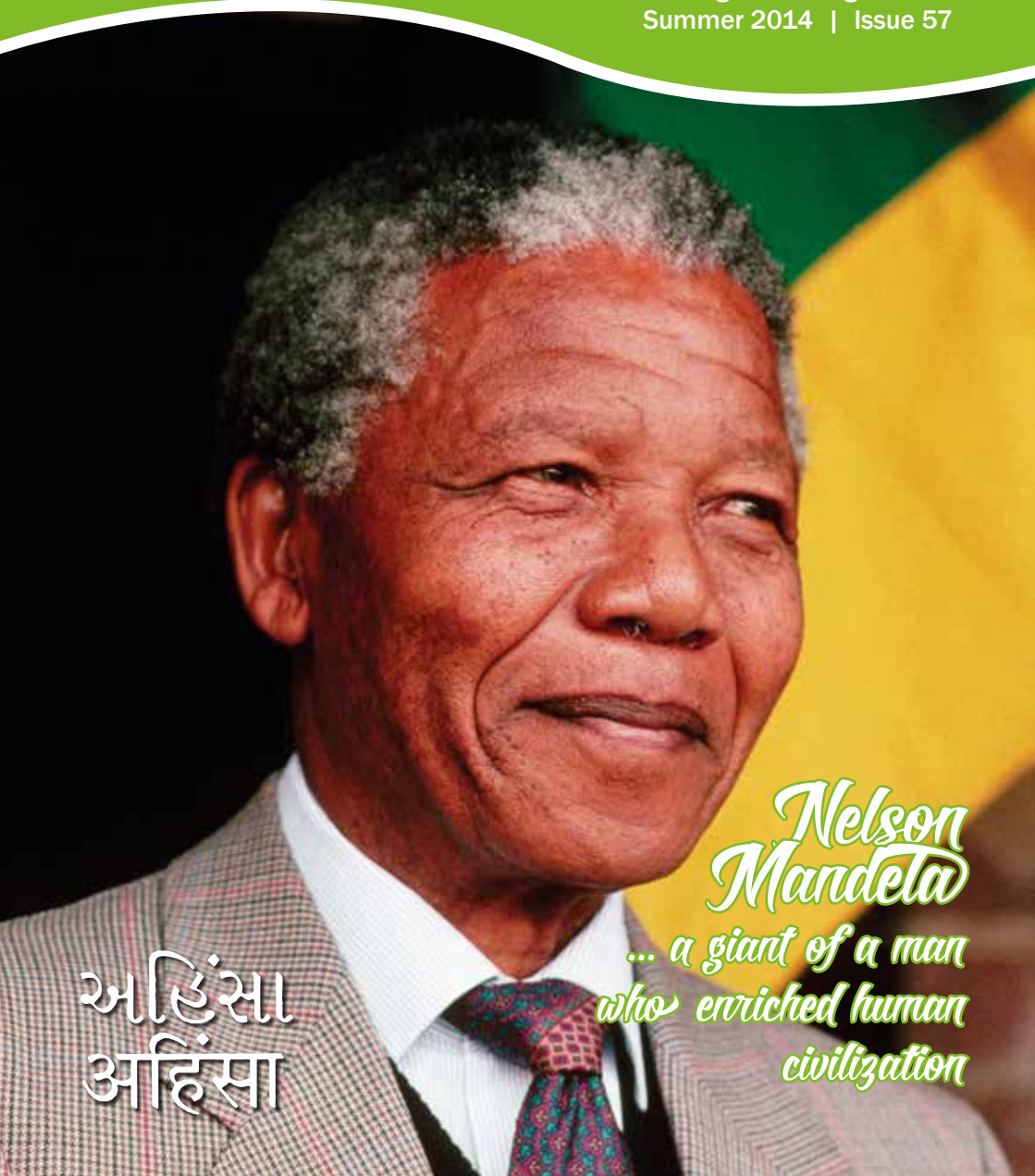




now in our 36th year

Ahimsa

Newsletter of the Young Indian Vegetarians
Summer 2014 | Issue 57



*Nelson
Mandela*

*... a giant of a man
who enriched human
civilization*

अहिंसा
अहिंसा



Dear Friends

Welcome to another issue of Ahimsa. Human existence revolves around food. Nourished with food a human baby grows into a mature adult. We have acquired a need for vast varieties of food to meet the desires of our different taste buds. It distresses us to see people starving and in most cultures of the world feeding the hungry or feeding a guest is considered an act of great pleasure as well as compassion. A great deal of pleasure is derived by eating food in the company of others or family members. Yet it is also a most personal human ritual. What we eat goes into our bodies and as such it affects our very being. It also affects our bowel movements! The saints and sages of India going back tens of thousands of years put great importance on what should and should not be eaten. The type of food we eat affects us physically as well as mentally. Food prepared lovingly or in anger also affects the consumer. As well as being vegetarian strict Hindus and Jains do not eat onions nor garlic. Though these foods have many medicinal properties they are considered to arouse passion and thus not good for those on a spiritual path! What we eat should be fresh and vegetarian and preferably vegan since it does not come from gross violence inflicted on any other living being. Saying a small prayer before eating purifies our thoughts and calms us. By eating with a calm mind one benefits both physically and mentally. Food should be eaten slowly and chewed thoroughly.

Going without food or fasting regularly is also highly recommended since it has many health as well as spiritual benefits. The strongest human desire is the desire to eat and fasting subdues this greatest of desires, making it easier to connect with God and make spiritual progress. We eat to live, not live to eat! Jain monks are known to fast for more than a year and yet they come to no harm. Monks practising yoga seem to be able to live without food for a long time and are known to live well over hundred years! Some individuals eat only fruits or raw food. There is much more to the human body than just blood and bones! The ancient Indian system of medicine, Ayurveda, considers food and plants as medicine. For example long pepper, called pipli in Hindi, is the most widely used of all Ayurvedic herbs. It helps in improving digestion and assimilation and metabolism of food. The Greek physician Hippocrates famously said, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." All newly qualified doctors take the Hippocratic Oath.

Throughout human history food grains were a precious commodity and never in overabundance and one of the benefits of this situation was that human beings were healthier and obesity was unknown! Over the last 150 years the factory farming of animals has created a food mountain of cheap meat in wealthier nations, which has resulted in serious health problems as well as the near environmental destruction of our planet. With the human population set to grow to 9.5 billion by 2050 and a projected need to raise 120 billion animals for meat we are heading for a catastrophe in terms of environmental damage and mass starvation. There is already a rush to buy fertile land in Africa by richer nations so as to protect their food supplies. Precious crops that could feed the poor of the world are being used up to make bio-fuel. Whilst generations before us took from mother Earth only as much as they needed, we are stripping the Earth of all its resources and in the process leaving nothing for future generations except a planet that will be uninhabitable. We are here on this planet at the most for 100 years. Why can we not spend it in friendship with all the rest of God's creation? The trees, forests, rivers, oceans, mountains, animals, birds, fishes – all could live happily if only human beings changed! All we need is kindness and compassion and we can leave this world having done the right thing and perhaps achieve what the Buddhists call Nirvana – getting out of cycles of birth and death. Please promote a vegetarian and vegan lifestyle.

Nitin Mehta

The Young Indian Vegetarians

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Communicate! Please acknowledge receipt of this newsletter by emailing us. Do you have a story you think our readers might be interested in? We would like to hear from you. Please write to us or email us with anything which you feel may be of interest.

Nelson Mandela... a giant of a man who enriched human civilization



It is the small and often many insignificant episodes in the lives of great souls that separate them from the rest and here is one such moving incident in the life of Nelson Mandela. In around June 1961 Mandela spent some time on a farm at Liliesleaf in Rivonia, a suburb of Johannesburg. His then wife, Winnie, brought him an old rifle for target practice. One day he shot a sparrow with it and was mortified when the five-year-old son of a friend rounded on him saying, "Why did you kill that bird? Its mother will be sad." Mandela said, "My mood immediately shifted from one of pride to shame. I felt this small boy had far greater humanity than I did." It was an odd sensation for a man who was the leader of a nascent guerrilla army.

The regret he felt at his action and his willingness to learn from a five-year-old were the making of a great man.

Speak

An organization called SPEAK has been tirelessly demonstrating, outside the Oxford University Animal-Testing Laboratory for 10 years, to stop the cruel practice of vivisection at the world-famous Oxford University. A Mahaveer Award was presented to the group on 23 March 2014.

Mahaveer Award

Presented to SPEAK for 10 long years of campaigning for animals abused at Oxford University. Generations to come will remember your compassion and determination to end cruelty inflicted on thousands of animals.

YIV 23/3/2014

At the presentation I said that a day will come soon when this evil practice will end and at that time it is the compassion and commitment of SPEAK supporters that will be remembered with pride.



L-R: Janice Corner, Steve Magee, Sheila English, Nitin Mehta

Tony Benn, the UK's most respected politician, a passionate campaigner for social justice and compassion to animals, dies.



Tony Benn died on 14 March 2014 aged 86. Tony had been a vegetarian for many years and was present at the vegetarian rally we held on 22 July 1990 in Hyde Park. The event had massive media coverage. Many papers referred to the event as 'Veggie Benn'. Tony became a vegetarian after his son told him about the colossal use of crops to feed animals to produce meat. At the rally Tony said that he felt very healthy as a vegetarian and he opposed animal exploitation as much as he opposed human exploitation. Tony often mentioned that he had met Mahatma Gandhi

when he was a child. Gandhi had made a great impact on young Tony, which shaped his concern for social justice and equality. He was also a passionate campaigner for stopping all wars and advocated pacifism. The following quote from Tony shows his concern for animals:

"The case for animal testing is now being directly challenged by scientists and doctors and their judgement must be taken seriously."

The picture below shows Tony receiving the Lord Parshvanath Award in Trafalgar Square on 17 June 2001 from the late Sudhaben Mehta.



An Apple a day keeps the doctor away!

Researchers at Oxford University say that eating an apple a day should be compulsory for all over 50s! It is a life-saver, which reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke. Eating apples every day could save as many lives as statin drugs and without the side effects of diabetes and muscle disorders. Using a mathematical model, the researchers say that if 70% of over-50s ate an apple a day 8,500 deaths from heart disease would be prevented in the UK every year compared with 9,400 if everyone took a statin.



Figs Are Not Vegetarian!

Figs (anjeer in Hindi) are pollinated by wasps. Figs may contain dead female wasps (dissolved in the fruit) and their eggs. This will come as a shock to many Indian vegetarians but it is true and so no more figs or Indian sweets made from figs!



Coffee Anyone?

This story will make you wonder where human civilization is heading! Civets are small wild cat-like animals, tens of thousands of which are captured and confined to cramped cages in Indonesia. They are fed a diet of coffee berries. Kopi luwak is an exorbitantly expensive type of coffee made from beans excreted by the civets! This revolting brew is all the rage amongst connoisseurs! PETA has launched a campaign to stop this trade and persuaded major hotel chains and retailers such as Harrods not to stock it. The mind boggles that the droppings of an animal have become a delicacy!

No Honey for me Honey!

Honey is nectar produced by flowers that has been swallowed by bees and regurgitated to be stored as a primary food source. In other words honey is bee vomit! Each bee produces 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime. A bee colony's food reserve is taken from them so that people can consume this unnecessary product. Farmed bees are subjected to drug and pesticide treatment, artificial insemination and death and injury caused by handling, transport and human interference with their environment. Despite claims to the contrary, it is questionable whether there are any health benefits from eating honey. People with asthma and allergies are advised not to consume honey.



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because you deserve the ultimate*

Namaste & Welcome

Shayona Caterers (Previously known as Saya Caterers) is the number one choice for Authentic Indian Vegetarian Cuisine. Over the years, Shayona has developed a reputation for its innovative and outstanding food, unique and authentic themes and professionalism. Shayona has maintained the flexibility and level of personal service, which it prides itself on. The evocative aromas and flavours of their personalised hand manufactured cuisine, have entertained thousands of guests at venues all over the country.

Mouthwatering Menus

Shayona Caterers presents an extensive innovative menu, drawn from various regions of India, especially the western state of Gujarat. If you require a dish that is not listed on our menu, please do enquire and we will be happy to accommodate your requirements. We cater for clients with specific dietary requirements (abstaining from onions and garlic) and can adapt our recipes to your individual taste and preferences.

Contact Us

If you have any queries about our catering services or would like to book an appointment to discuss your requirements, please don't hesitate to contact us using any of the methods below

Our helpful staff will be delighted to answer all your queries and work with you to give your special event that perfect flavour!

*Shayona Caterers (Previously known as Saya Caterers)
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*Abbey Industrial Estate
Mount Pleasant
Alperton, Middx. HA0 1NR*

*Phone: 0208 900 0314
Fax: 0208 900 2058
Email: admin@shayonaid.co.uk
Contact: Chandrakant Patel*

Did You Know?

- 1 One billion animals are killed in the UK each year for human consumption.
- 2 Around 100,000 'surplus' calves in the dairy industry are shot immediately after birth every year and others are sent on punishing journeys to veal farms.
- 3 A cow would normally live to be 25 years old but on modern dairy farms they are worn out at five years and sent for slaughter.
- 4 Cows' milk contains powerful growth hormones. One in particular, IGF-1, is reported to accelerate the growth of malignant cells in people and is linked to the development of prostate, breast and ovarian cancers.
- 5 Huge quantities of precious water resources are used in raising animals for meat. It takes around 1,000 litres of water to grow one kilo of wheat but 11,000 litres to produce just one quarter-pound beefburger.
- 6 Between 2,000 and 4,000 litres of water are needed for a cow to produce just one litre of milk.
- 7 60% of all cereals grown in the European Union is fed to animals being raised for meat.
- 8 Experiments carried out at Queen's University in Belfast found that lobsters and crabs feel pain. Lobsters are boiled alive. Billions of these crustaceans are caught or reared for the food industry. Human beings need to reflect on the cruelty inflicted on these creatures.
- 9 Only 12% of drugs and treatment prescribed by your doctor works, whilst 57% of what is prescribed will either do you harm or have no effect. A research team working with the British Medical Journal has come to this conclusion.

Do's and Don'ts

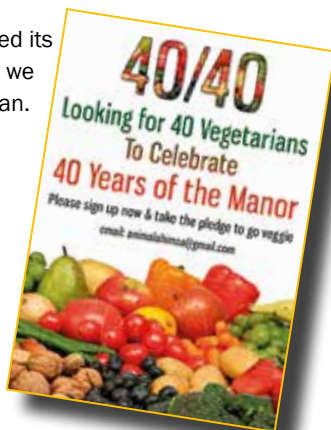
- A Do persuade others to give up meat.
- B Do speak the word 'vegetarian' at every opportunity.
- C Go only to vegetarian restaurants.
- D Don't wear or buy leather goods, (sofas shoes etc).

40/40 Project achieved!

The Hare Krishna temple in Aldenham, near Watford, celebrated its 40th anniversary last year (2013). As part of the celebrations we planned to get 40 people to take a pledge to become vegetarian. To achieve this goal we held stalls at many events during the summer and achieved the figure! 40 people took a pledge to give up meat, fish and eggs.

Hare Krishna devotees are strict vegetarians and George Harrison of the Beatles was one of the admirers of the movement. Paul McCartney, also of the Beatles, promotes vegetarianism.

Here are the 40 people, with only first names being mentioned to respect their privacy: **Punam, Poonam, Arthi, Krisha, Deepika, Vadims, Surendra, Somua, Amrender, Gayathrie, Angshuman, David, Varun, Namita, Nitharthanjan, Manoj, Amit, Priti, Avni, Venkatasamy, Helen, Alan, Mitch, Katy, Kam, Oscar, Jitka, Jaymini, Radhika, Nicola, Astrid, Alix, Neha, Om, Tina, Sai, Neelam, Bhavin, Naveen and Parvadee.** In addition **Gloria** pledged to give up meat only.



The following successful events took place since the last newsletter

- 1 On 28 August 2013 we held a stall at the Janmastmi festival at the Hare Krishna temple in Watford.
- 2 Continuing with the festival we held a stall at the temple on 1 September.
- 3 On 23 September I took part in a fringe meeting organized by the Labour Party Animal Welfare Society in Brighton. The meeting was addressed by speakers from the British Union For the Abolition of Vivisection, the League Against Cruel Sports and the World Society for the Protection of Animals. I urged the meeting to draw up a charter for animal rights. It was a pleasure to meet Wally Burly, who has worked tirelessly for the Labour Animal Welfare Society.
- 4 On 27 September I gave a talk at the Slough Hindu temple. A spirited discussion took place after the talk! One person agreed to become vegetarian.
- 5 On 5 and 6 October we held a stall at VegFest at Olympia. A special thanks to Mahersh, Nishma, Minal, Rehma and Ranjan for helping. Our banner, 'Are You A Vegetarian or a Graveyard of dead Animals', was a big hit!
- 6 On 3 November we attended the Diwali celebrations at the Hare Krishna temple in Watford. I was asked to address the gathering by devotee Ravin Ganatra. I said that compassion is the root of religion and we need to show compassion to all living beings. Srila Prabhupada, the founder of the Hare Krishna movement, had said that as long as there are slaughterhouses there will be wars. Let us resolve to persuade as many people as possible to give up meat, fish and eggs.
- 7 On 10 November I spoke at an event held by the Gayatri Parivar in Croydon. Special thanks to Mayura Patel for inviting me to speak.
- 8 On 20 November I spoke at a multi-faith event organized by Eastbourne Interfaith group. I said that the religions of India, namely Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism, placed great importance on compassion towards animals.
- 9 On 28 November I gave a talk to the Oshwal Elderly Club in Ilford. I asked members to inculcate the value of compassion in their grandchildren! They should be encouraged to be vegetarian. Lalitaben Shah organized the talk.
- 10 On Sunday 1 December I had the pleasure of attending the first annual Christmas lunch organized by the Jain Centre in Colindale. Dr Natubhai Shah, the founder of the centre, said that he was inspired by the Christmas lunch organized by YIV in Croydon for the last 32 years. The local MP, Mayor and councillors were amongst the guests.
- 11 On 2 December I gave a talk to Barts and the London Vegetarian and Vegan Society. Barts and London School of Medicine and Dentistry is affiliated to Queen Mary's University. Special thanks to Dev-Priya Singvi for organizing the event.
- 12 On Sunday 8 December I attended the 2nd annual Christmas lunch organized by the Crawley Hindu temple, also known as the Apple Tree Centre. The MP for Crawley, Henry Smith, who is vegetarian, was present with his family, as were members of many faith groups and local residents. By sharing vegetarian food new friendships are forged. It also promotes civic pride. Christmas vegetarian lunch is now a fixed event on the calendar of the temple! A special thanks to Aswinbhai Soni and all the committee members for their efforts.
- 13 On 15 December we had our 33rd annual Christmas lunch. The Mayor of Croydon, Yvette Hopley, and MP for Croydon North, Steve Reed, were present. Tony Newman, the new leader of Croydon Council, who is vegetarian, was also present. Around 120 people enjoyed the lunch. 33 years! All those years ago we started

with the aim of promoting vegetarianism and friendship amongst the people of Croydon. The same objectives drive us today!

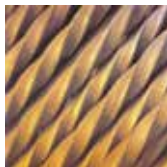
- 14 On 26 January 2014 I spoke at the Republic Day of India celebrations at the Ilford Hindu temple. The event was organized by the friends of the BJP party of India. I said that yoga and vegetarianism are the greatest gifts of Hinduism to the world. All practising Hindus should be vegetarian. A special thanks to BN Bhanot for inviting me.
- 15 On 15 February we took part in a demonstration outside the Japanese embassy in London. We were protesting against the killing of whales and dolphins. Japan has now agreed to stop killing these beautiful creatures!
- 16 On 27 February I spoke at an event in Harrow in remembrance of Mahatma Gandhi, organized by the Mahatma Gandhi Foundation. I said that human beings will get peace only when they stop the violence against the animal kingdom. We cannot expect peace for

ourselves while we show no regard for the animals who share this planet with us.

- 17 On 16 March I gave a talk at an event organized by the Gujarati Cultural Society of Brighton at Portslade town hall. Dr Shah, Dr Jani and Dhirubhai Gadhi gave me a very warm welcome and the event was a great success.
- 18 On 6 April I gave a talk to the Hindu Heritage Group in Stanmore. A lively discussion took place! Special thanks to JD Jain for inviting me.
- 19 The Centre for Conscious Awareness invited me to give a talk on 3 April at Harrow Methodist Church and Community Centre. Special thanks to Diptiben Patel for the invitation. One person agreed to become vegetarian.

A special thanks to Patricia Tricker for proofreading this newsletter.

Patricia is a vegan activist and freelance translator working into English from French, German, Italian & Spanish, specializing in economics, finance, accountancy, company law & archaeology
email: translation@phonecoop.coop.



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**Congratulations & Best Wishes to
Young Indian Vegetarians
for 36 Years of campaigning**

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We supported the following organisations in 2013:

- 1 The Mayhew Animal Home, which has helped animals and their carers since 1886. They help thousands of domestic animals escape from cruelty and neglect every year.
www.themayhew.org
- 2 IFAW (International Fund For Animal Welfare) – www.ifaw.org
- 3 Dogs Trust, which does wonderful work in finding loving homes for abandoned dogs – www.dogstrust.org.uk
- 4 Riverside Animal Centre, Beddington Park, Church Rd, Wallington, SM6 7NN
- 5 Compassion in World Farming
- 6 PETA – People for Ethical Treatment of Animals
- 7 Battersea Dogs' and Cats' Home
- 8 Wood Green Animal Charity – www.woodgreen.org.uk

YIV is grateful to the following organisations:

- 1 Jain Samaj Europe for a donation of £1000. Special thanks to president Ushaben Mehta, Pankajbhai Shah, Dr Rameshbhai Mehta and all the committee members for continued support over many years.
- 2 Lalitaben Shah and all the members of the Fitness Club in Ilford for a donation of £168.59.
- 3 Mahaveer Foundation for a donation of £500. Our sincere thanks to Vinodbhai Kapashi and all the members for their support.
- 4 Navnat Vanik Association for a donation of £300. Thank you president Dhirubhai Galani, Jayantbhai Doshi and Rameshbhai Shah for helping us to help animals.
- 5 Mahavir Trust (Paraspar) for a donation of £200. Thank you Pravinbhai Mehta and all the members.

Britain's Richest Man is a veggie

Sri Hinduja and his brother Gopi Hinduja are the richest brothers in the UK. Their wealth is around £11.9 billion! Sri is a devout Hindu and a strict vegetarian. It is said he takes his own food when dining with the Queen! They live next to the Queen in a six-storey Carlton House terrace. We hope this inspires those Hindus who begin to eat meat when faced with any challenge such as going to university, where veggie food such as they eat at home may not be available! India's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, is also vegetarian.



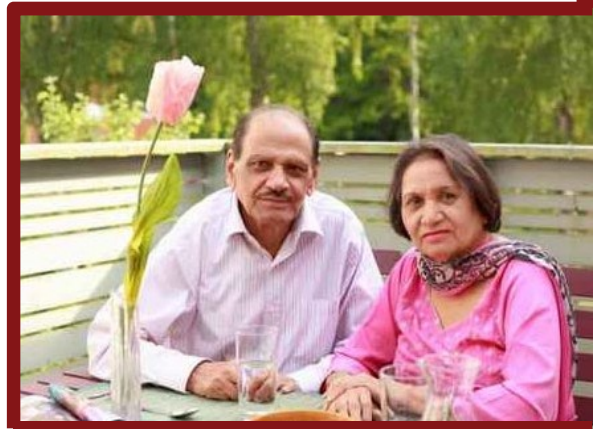
IHT Clock is ticking away!!

Have you adequately protected the next generation!!!

With UK average property prices showing no signs of slowing down and the government have frozen the Nil Rate band (£650,000 on second death) until 2018, more and more families are going to be caught by the IHT trap **(40% of the net estate)**.

Many individuals have also built up portfolios of investment properties which could form part of their estate.

“A study carried out by the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) states that based on their forecast the number of persons paying IHT is to increase to 10% of deaths in 2018/19, from just 2.6% of deaths in 2009/10.”*



Act Now!! Some effective tax planning can help your family mitigate the overall IHT liability. We are sure none of us would like to leave behind unplanned tax matters for our children or loved ones.

Planning is very important and we can help you reduce the impact of Inheritance Tax:

- Second death policies
- Discounted Gift Scheme
- Planning your wills*
- Lifetime gifts
- Altering property tenure
- Aim Stock portfolio
- Maximise spouse exemption
- Setting up a trust

Contact **Ajit Shah** or **Shital Gohil** for more about the Inheritance Tax Planning strategy that's right for you.

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❖ Source – Institute for Fiscal Studies

❖ For Will writing we act as introducers

FARMAGEDDON

THE REAL COST OF MEAT

Farmageddon is an eye-opener of a book written by Philip Lymbery, Chief Executive of Compassion in World Farming, and Isabel Okeshott, Sunday Times political editor. For two years Philip and Isabel travelled to many parts of the world to study the devastating impact of factory farming. I have read the book from cover to cover and have noted below the issues I found most compelling:



In 1958 Chairman Mao launched a war on sparrows for eating too much grain. The whole country was mobilized to kill them. According to one newspaper report an estimated 194,432 sparrows were killed in one day in Shanghai alone. Millions were killed throughout China. Sparrows were vital to the food chain. The bugs they fed on thrived, the locust population spiralled out of control, as did grasshoppers. The insects devoured the crops and famine followed: a salient lesson to human beings that when you disturb nature it reacts with ferocity.

The dairy cow

One cow generates as much waste as fifty humans. There were 1.7 million cows in California in 2001. Together they generate more excrement than the entire population of the UK. Cowpats are channelled into vast lagoons attached to farms. The emission of noxious gases and seepage are inevitable, causing water pollution and the proliferation of e. coli bacteria. Ground water becomes polluted with nitrates. Effluent from cows enters water supplies. These megadairies cause heart disease, birth defects, stunted lung development and asthma in children. 30 years ago the average dairy cow produced 5,000 litres of milk but today, fed on high-energy concentrated grains, not grass, it produces 7,000 litres. This is zero-grazing, in which cows are kept indoors for much of their lives. 'Dry Cow' therapy is where cows are given antibiotic infusions in their udders to prevent them getting mastitis twice a year. The global livestock industry contributes 14.5% of human-produced greenhouse-gas emissions – more than all our cars, planes and trains put together.

Bees vital for human survival

As a result of industrial farming there are no longer enough bees to pollinate crops. Most fruits and vegetable crops are dependent on pollination by bees. Wild bees, essential for natural pollination, have been destroyed by chemical-soaked monocultures and industrial farming methods that have robbed them of the varied habitats they need to survive. Chemical pesticides used on a massive scale also kill off bees. Farmers in America are forced to hire bees, costing them a huge amount of money. In China crops are pollinated by hand! Like the proverbial canary in a coal mine warning of impending danger and like birds and bees, butterflies are the hallmarks of a healthy environment. Their plight is part of the complex web of life that underpins food and farming. A whole industry has grown up around

factory farming, with companies developing animal feed with their latest formulae, drugs companies and equipment manufacturers.

Farmed fish

Around 100 billion farmed fish are produced globally every year, 30 billion more than all the chickens, cows, pigs and other farm animals reared worldwide. Farmed fish such as salmon and trout are fed on smaller fish. It takes between three and five tonnes of small fish to produce one tonne of fish. Fish meal made from small pelagic fish is also fed to farmed animals such as chickens and pigs. Up to 50,000 farmed salmon are kept in a single cage. They suffer from cataracts, fin and tail injuries and body deformities. They are infested with parasites and are forced to compete for space and oxygen. Sea lice from fish farms kill a huge number of wild fish since they latch onto wild fish passing fish farms. As they become sexually mature fish lose their appetite and lose flesh so a technique called triploidy is used to produce infertile fish. Farmed fish attract predatory seals, birds, otters and other wildlife, which are shot by fish farmers. Ocean ranching is a system whereby juvenile fish are hatched and reared in captivity before being released into the sea. The liberated fish then live naturally in the wild before returning to their imprinted release point as adults, where they are harvested.

The cost of health

The NHS has an annual budget of £100 billion. Every year 25,000 people die of drug-resistant microorganisms. By 2030 half of all Americans will be obese. In the US obesity-related health costs will soar to \$48 billion dollars and to £1.25 billion in the UK. Today's chicken has almost three times more fat than a typical chicken in 1970 because traditional chickens were active and ate vegetation and seeds. Modern chickens are fed high-energy cereals and are kept in cages. The world produces 80 million tonnes of chicken meat from an estimated 55 billion chickens annually. The UK raises more than 800 million chickens for meat every year. UK farm animals produce 80 million tonnes of muck every year.

Pigs

At any time 10 million pigs are being raised on factory farms in North Carolina. Upwards of 3000 huge lagoons of pig sewage dot the North Carolina landscape, each containing faeces, urine, blood, excrement, afterbirths and even still-born piglets. Lagoons sometimes overflow into fields and seep into ground water and rivers causing eutrophication, a process in which phosphorus and nitrogen over-enrich water, distorting the eco-system. The excessive nutrients create the ideal condition for algae to flourish, sapping oxygen levels in the water until eventually there is too little oxygen to support any other life and leading to dead zones. The number of fish in rivers with poor oxygen levels drops dramatically. Half the world's pigs are in China. In 2011 the British government signed a multi-million-pound livestock trade agreement with China involving live export of thousands of prime breeding pigs. A UK-bred sow produces 22 piglets a year compared with 14 in China. Chinese farmers feed a steroid called Clenbuterol to pigs to make them grow faster without becoming fat. Clenbuterol is illegal in most countries and has side-effects such as palpitations and stiffening of the heart muscle.

Food, land and hunger

90% of the world's soya is fed to industrially farmed livestock. To keep up with the food demands of a growing world population an additional two million square kilometres of land may be needed by 2030. Argentina exports nearly half of all soya meal produced. Soya beans are ground into meal and shipped to Europe and China to fatten pigs and chickens. If eaten direct rather than fed to industrially reared livestock, cereals alone could feed three billion people. Whereas traditional farms relied on manual labour, modern agriculture is heavily dependent on oil- and gas-guzzling machinery and huge quantities of petrochemicals. Professor David Pimentel, a renowned ecologist at Cornell University in New York State, found that conventional crop production in America swallows up the equivalent of 63 barrels of oil per hectare, two-thirds of it for petrochemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and other inputs. One tonne of US maize, a staple feed for intensive livestock, takes a barrel of oil to produce and modern farming methods globally use two barrels of oil on average to produce enough fertilizer and pesticide for one hectare of crops. Conventional sources of crude oil and gas are running out and there is a consensus that energy is going to become even more expensive in future, with a knock-on effect on food prices. On average meat needs around 10 times as much water per calorie to produce as vegetables and other plants. The UN warns that farming is already by far the dominant cause of water depletion globally, taking more water out of the ground than rain puts back in and accounting for about a quarter of sea-level rise. When the Earth's surface is paved over, stripped of forests and fields and drained of natural springs and creeks the rain will not go into rivers and lakes to be used by people and animals but will head out to sea, resulting in rising sea levels. Up to two billion people in the world already suffer water shortages; scientists predict that numbers will at least double and as many as seven billion people could be affected by 2050. Industrialization of farming, in step with population growth, is likely to place the greatest strain on water supplies over the next four decades. According to UN FAO predictions the livestock population will almost double by 2050 to 120 billion slaughtered a year. A third of the world's entire cereal harvest and 90% of its soya now feeds industrially reared livestock. At the same time millions of hectares of fertile land are being turned over to biofuels. There is now dangerous competition between crops for human consumption, crops for industrial farms and crops for cars, resulting in huge price increases. The cereals currently fed to factory-farmed animals could feed three billion people. It takes an average 6kg of plant protein such as cereals to make 1kg of high-quality meat. For every 6kg of plant protein fed to animals only 1kg of animal protein is given back. Producing 1kg of beef requires as much as 20kg of feed. According to environmentalist Chandan Nair the true cost of a four-dollar burger is something like US \$100 when the cost of converting grains into meat and water and energy use are taken into consideration. For food production alone at least two million square kilometres of additional land will be needed by 2030, an area eight times the size of the UK. A similar area of land could be flooded by the middle of the next century.

GM crops

In 1990, before the arrival of GM crops in Argentina, 35 million litres of chemicals were used on crops per year. By 2010 300 million litres were used, almost 10 times the pesticides and herbicides used pre-GM, causing cancers, allergies, asthma, miscarriage and birth defects. GM crops are linked to a dramatic fall in the number of butterflies, bees, weeds and seeds. The crops that are most likely to be GM are also those most likely to be destined for animal feed. The big four GM crops – maize, soya, cotton and rapeseed – are all used for animal feed. The US feeds 40% of its maize and 85% of its GM maize to farm animals. GM seeds have to be bought every year because they are patented terminator seeds. Whilst GM crops are initially pest resistant they very soon succumb. Poor farmers are deep in debt, unable to cover the cost of GM seeds and chemicals. Since 1995 more than 250,000 farmers in India have committed suicide, trapped by failing GM crops and debts. A GM milk-boosting hormone is widely used in the US. It involves giving regular jabs with an artificial version of natural growth hormones to boost milk production by 10 to 20%. This bovine growth hormone is associated with serious health risks for the cows, which suffer from painful udder infections, digestive disorders and lameness. Though GM crops are banned in the UK there is no law against giving animals GM feed.

Soil erosion

Soil erosion affects almost a third of the world's cropland. Land is lost to urbanization, contaminated by irrigation and desertification.

Frankenstein science

Cows genetically modified to produce 'human milk': it is likely that in the next 10 years some kind of hybrid cow/human milk will be available. At China Agricultural University scientists have reportedly introduced human genes into 300 dairy cows to enable them to produce milk with some of the key properties of human breast milk. Philip Lymbery concludes that the industrial food system is geared towards producing food in volume, regardless of quality, in many ways that rely on large amounts of finite resources, including land, oil and water. He quotes Albert Schweitzer, "Man has lost the capacity to foresee and forestall." If something is not done soon the Farmageddon future could become a reality.

Farmageddon is available from Compassion in World Farming (www.ciwf.org.uk)



Vegetarian Schools

A school in Queens, New York city, has become exclusively vegetarian. Public school 244p Queens has started serving only vegetarian food to its pupils as part of the city-wide mission to improve public health. The school has the support of its partner, the New York Coalition for Healthy School Food. According to the school principal, Bob Groff, the meat-free diet is already showing positive results. He said, *"Our internal studies show a clear reduction in the percentage of fat in body weight."* Parents of pupils at the school have an opportunity to test the vegetarian dishes served at family-dinner nights.

In the UK Lewes new independent school in Sussex offers only vegetarian lunch and requires packed lunches to be meat-free. St Christopher School in Letchworth, Hertfordshire, has been vegetarian since 1915. It was the desire of the founders of the school to serve food that members of any faith could sit and eat together.

A fully vegetarian village in India

RAJBIRAJ: Itahari Tole, a village in Bishnupur, Saptari, has turned into a pure vegetarian settlement. There are 200 households in the village. Consumption of meat and fish is prohibited in this settlement.

The villagers follow Kabirpanthi philosophy and are against killing any living organism. The village prohibits animal sacrifices to appease the gods and no one is allowed to hunt in the village.

The villagers offer fruits, betel nuts and flowers to their chosen deity in Kabir Ashram. Social activist Bhupendra Mandal said anybody found consuming meat would have to distribute curd and beaten rice to the entire village as penalty. There is also a vegetarian village in Israel - Amirim, by the Sea of Galilee - with 160 families and a total population of 600.

Sohum does us proud again!



Young Jain Sohum Shah organized the 2nd Vegetarian Day at his Reading school. On 1 May breakfast, lunch and dinner at the school were completely vegetarian! Around 600 day and boarding pupils enjoyed the vegetarian fare. The deputy head and the teachers were very impressed and have decided to organize a vegetarian day once a month! Well done Sohum, brother Rhim, mum Jagruti and dad Jayesh.

Protest outside Japanese embassy

Friday 21st Feb. 2014.

We joined hundreds of people in a noisy demonstration outside the Japanese embassy protesting at the killing of dolphins and whales. The Japanese are building up bad karma by killing these beautiful creatures for no good reason.



Postscript

Victory for whales: The International Court of Justice has ruled that there is no scientific basis for Japan to kill 900 whales a year. Japan has promised to abide by the ruling banning the killing of whales. Norway and Iceland continue killing whales and the pressure is on them. The United Nations decision could have a domino effect. This is victory for compassion and victory for animals. Against all odds we will continue to fight for animals and victory will come!

Jain Animal Sanctuary

Sheila Barber continues to look after the animals at the sanctuary in Burwash, Sussex. We continue sending £700 each month.

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Zoos in Europe kill 5,000 healthy animals a year.



Earlier this year Copenhagen Zoo caused an international furore over the killing of a healthy 18-month-old giraffe. Across Europe, 22 healthy zebras, four hippos and two Arabian oryx have also been put down this year.

Several German zookeepers were prosecuted in 2010 for killing three tiger cubs. According to Dr Lesley Dickie, executive director of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, between 3,000 and 5,000 healthy animals are put down every year across Europe. It is a great shame that a progressive country such as Denmark allowed the killing of the giraffe.

Never go to a zoo. Animals do not belong in zoos but in the wild. Young people should be educated about the plight of animals in zoos. Denmark's image is diminished in the eyes of millions of people all over the world. Denmark has also become infamous for the slaughter of hundreds of dolphins every year. This happens in the Faroe Islands, which are part of Denmark. This merciless killing of trapped dolphins is a despicable ritual blood sport. Denmark is building up bad karma!

The real story of the much-talked-about Omega 3.

The medical world has been singing the praises of a diet that includes oily fish owing to the omega 3 derived from it. Although omega-3 is often described as fish oil, it is in fact made by microscopic marine algae that are eaten or absorbed by fish.

Overfishing has greatly reduced the number of fish and other marine life. Farmed fish are what you get now. Farmed fish are unable to absorb sufficient omega-3 in their diets so they have to be fed smaller fish such as sand eels caught in the wild. This process is unsustainable. Among the many health claims for omega-3 is that it reduces the risk of heart disease. However the NHS website says: *'Despite claims that fish-oil supplements can help prevent numerous conditions including cancer, dementia, arthritis and heart problems, there is little hard evidence for them.'*

Omega-3 is available in flaxseed and flaxseed oil. The ecosystem of our rivers and oceans is on the point of collapse owing to the alleged medical benefits of a diet high in fish.

Because of the levels of pollution of our rivers and oceans fish contain mercury, which is very detrimental to human health. So no, not only is fish not vegetarian, it is not good for you!



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*Good news
from India*

The use of elephants in circuses will end since no new permits will be given to circuses by the Animal Welfare Board of India. The other good news is that the Initiative for Research and Innovation in Science and Intel Technology India Pvt. Ltd have banned experiments at their science fair, which is India's largest student science competition. PETA India was instrumental in bringing about these changes.





The new Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is a strict vegetarian

Maneka Gandhi, India's leading animal-rights activist, is a cabinet minister in the new government. The animal-rights movement of India fervently hopes that the slaughter of cattle is banned and all export of live animals is stopped immediately. India must become a country where animals are granted fundamental rights. As Mahatma Gandhi said, *"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress should be judged by the way it treats its animals."* Narendra Modi follows in the footsteps of other vegetarian prime ministers of India. Former Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, PV Narasimha Rao and HD Deve Gowda were vegetarians.

YIV Website

(www.youngindianvegetarians.co.uk)

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With Tony Benn at the first ever Vegetarian Rally in Hyde Park 1990

Picture Gallery

Talk at Barts and the London (affiliated to Queen Mary's University) Vegetarian and Vegan Society. A special thanks to Dev-Priya Singvi for organising the event.



George Buaben on going vegetarian!

I have now been a vegetarian for around 2 years. I was persuaded to give up meat, fish and eggs by my friend Nitin Mehta. My health now is better than ever. I have lost excessive weight and my headaches have gone. My digestive system is very good! I have persuaded a lot of my friends especially Ghanians to give up meat.



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