

## Press Release

### Committee on Petitions (Rajya Sabha)

**Subject: Hundred and Fifty-first Report on the petition praying for review of Meat Export Policy.**

The Committee on Petitions of Rajya Sabha under the Chairmanship of **Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari**, MP, presented its Hundred and Fifty-first Report to the Rajya Sabha on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2014 on the petition praying for review of Meat Export Policy. The petition was forwarded by Shri S.S.Ahluwalia, former M.P. (Rajya Sabha) signed by Jainacharya Vijay Ratnasundarsuri, a resident of Mumbai and two others to the Council of States (Rajya Sabha). In their petition, the petitioners contended that the Meat Export Policy was introduced by the Central Government in the year 1991-1992 to tide over the acute foreign exchange shortage in the country. The petitioners further contended that the Meat Export Policy is violative of the various State Animal Preservation Laws *viz.* Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. Besides this, the Law Commission of India in its 159<sup>th</sup> Report, the National Commission on Cattle in its Report submitted on 31.07.2002 and the Animal Welfare Board of India in its 67<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting have recommended ban on meat export.

2. The Committee during the course of its deliberations interacted with the petitioner, representatives of Department of Commerce, Department of Animal Husbandry, and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and some organizations/individuals who have submitted their memorandum to the Committee in response to a Press Communiqué issued in this regard.

3. Following are the important recommendations of the Committee:-

**The Committee is pained to know that time and again during the course of examination the Department of Commerce and other Government agencies which appeared before it, have generally given the impression that only male buffaloes are slaughtered for export and females are kept for milk. The Committee strongly condemns slaughtering of female milch buffaloes and recommends that the Government should immediately stop export of meat of female buffaloes. The Committee notes that despite regulation the procedure followed to certify each and every animal by the veterinary professionals is a mere formality and eyewash. The Committee understands that veterinary inspectors succumb to inducements and pass animals not really unproductive as useless and fit for slaughter. The Committee in this background strongly recommends for amendment in the current Foreign Trade Policy with reference to meat export policy S.No19 (a) Tariff item HS Code 0201 which reads as 'Meat of buffalo (both male and female) fresh and chilled as permissible items for export' to read as 'Meat of buffalo (strictly male only)'. The Committee further**

**recommends that all APEDA recognised export houses for meat export should not be allowed to export until they involve themselves in actual rearing of buffaloes.**

*(para 10.6 of the Report)*

**The Committee strongly recommended that the Department of Animal Husbandry may undertake a National Survey by taking atleast five districts in each state on a random basis to study the reasons for declining female buffalo population with each progressive year. The Committee also strongly recommends that the Department of Animal Husbandry should play a more proactive role in preserving the cattle wealth of the country instead of being a mute spectator.**

*(para 10.4 of the Report)*

**The Committee is constrained to note that the Department of Animal Husbandry has not taken this problem seriously and has not paid adequate stress to enhancement of buffalo population. The Committee feels that incessant increase of milk prices to the range of 20% year to year basis is an indication of a deeper malaise having created a mismatch between demand and supply of milk and recommends that Department of Animal Husbandry should initiate a pan India programme to organise Animal Husbandry on modern and scientific lines and also take steps for preserving and improving the breeds and prohibiting the slaughter of healthy and milch animals.**

*(para 10.5 of the Report)*

**The Committee raised its concern over administration of abattoirs and their maintenance. The Committee recommended that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare should send a team comprising of specialists to places like Aligarh and provide a status note on the sanitary conditions in areas in and around abattoirs and slaughter houses.**

*(para 9.1 of the Report)*

**The Committee recommends for random supervision by APEDA and laboratory testing of the products being exported so as to prevent any such violation. In case of detection of cow meat in export consignments the Committee recommends for strict and time bound action including cancellation of APEDA registration.**

*(para 10.14 of the Report)*

**The Committee strongly recommends that the entire Meat Export Policy be again reviewed by the Department of Commerce in a time bound manner within three months by involving all stake holders including members of the public. The Ministry of Commerce may take into consideration the findings/ observations/ recommendations of this Committee including long term implications of the meat export policy before finalising the review. The Committee recommends that pending this review no new abattoirs should be registered by APEDA.**

*(para 10.15 of the Report)*

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