

28 May 2018

To
All District Superintendents of Police
All Districts of Tamil Nadu

Subject: **Investigation Report: Bulls Electrically Shocked And Beaten At Illegal Rekla Races.**

Dear Superintendent of Police,

I am writing to you from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India on behalf of our more than 1 million members and supporters to bring your attention to the findings of a recent shocking video investigation footage and report (**Annexure-1**) revealing cruelty to bulls at rekla (bullock cart racing) events held in Tamil Nadu earlier this year, to urge you to take penal action against the organisers and participants of such illegal events in your district and to prevent such cruel events in future

The footage, taken by PETA India at the Kolumakondan in Dindigul District on 21 January and S Kumarapalayam in Coimbatore District on 4 February, shows bulls being electroshocked, roughly pulled by their nose ropes, and beaten and jabbed with nail-tipped, pointed wooden sticks and their tails being bitten and yanked to make them run faster. Bull pairs crashed to the ground and into barricades during the races, and the animals were denied basic necessities, including food, water, and protection from the sweltering heat.

Through an RTI-request response (**Annexure-2**), the government of Tamil Nadu made clear that the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Conduct of Jallikattu) Rules, 2017, framed under The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act, 2017, prohibits rekla races in the state. However, illegal races are openly organised in the State, including a recent one held on 14 May in Panchalankurichi village in Thoothukudi District, which was flagged off by a deputy superintendent of police. The government's response to the RTI request also stated that fox jallikattu – an event that's rampant in the state during Pongal and for which foxes (a protected species under the Wildlife [Protection] Act, 1972) are illegally captured from the wild, their hind legs are tied together, and the animals are chased through a village – isn't a part of Tamil Nadu's culture and tradition.

On 11 July 2011, *The Gazette of India* published a notification from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (now the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) stating that bulls could no longer be used as "performing" animals. **This means that bull races are banned everywhere in India.** Through its judgement on 7 May 2014, the Supreme Court of India confirmed this ban on cruel sports like jallikattu and bull races across the country and observed that bulls aren't anatomically suited to take part in races. While the Tamil Nadu Government passed The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act, 2017, allowing jallikattu, this Act didn't overturn the ban on rekla races. PETA India – whose investigation reports of 2017 and 2018 show photographic and video evidence of cruelty in such events even when legally regulated – continues to demand that a

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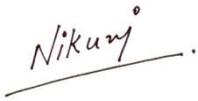
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permanent ban be instituted on the use of bulls in such events and has filed a petition in the Supreme Court questioning the constitutional validity of Tamil Nadu's law allowing jallikattu.

In light of the findings of the investigation that rekla races are inherently cruel and the Government of Tamil Nadu's RTI response stating that Rekla races are illegal, I request you to kindly take appropriate steps to take strict penal action against the organisers and participants of such events and to ensure that Rekla races are not conducted in your district.

Should you have any query, please feel free to reach me on 9919397382 or NikunjS@petaindia.org

Sincerely,



Nikunj Sharma
Lead-Public Policy

Copy to:

1. Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu, for information and necessary action please

Enclosures:

1. Investigation report of illegal rekla races held in Kolumakondan in Dindigul District on 21 January and S Kumarapalayam in Coimbatore District on 4 February. Annexure-1
2. RTI response from Government of Tamil Nadu stating that Rekla races are illegal. Annexure-2

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