

URGENT AND IMPORTANT

Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India
Prime Minister's Office
South Block, Raisina Hill
New Delhi 110 011

3 February 2020

Re: Request to stop cruel and illegal killing methods of unwanted baby chicks by the Indian poultry industry

Shri Modi Ji,

I'm writing from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India to inform you that the French and German governments have banned the shredding of live male chicks by their egg industries – bans that will be implemented in both countries in the near future. (A CNN article on this subject is appended as **Annexure 1**). In behalf of millions of suffering baby chicks, I'm writing to request that India follow suit through a direction from the central government to all states and union territories requiring that their poultry hatcheries end cruel and illegal methods of killing male and other unwanted baby chicks, because they violate The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960. Instead, steps should be taken by the central Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries to bring *in ovo* sexing technology to India, which can be used to determine the sex of an embryo long before the chick is fully formed, thereby providing the egg industry with an opportunity to destroy eggs, instead of living male baby birds, who are currently being killed in cruel ways simply because they can't lay eggs. In the meantime, states and union territories should require that hatcheries handle unwanted chicks as recommended for poultry by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and the Law Commission of India.

Millions of male baby chicks are considered to be "waste" by the egg industry, and chicks who are deformed, sick, or otherwise considered not useful are also killed. In India, as documentation shows, they are killed via a range of inhumane methods, including being drowned in bins full of water, burned in fires, crushed or suffocated in large drums or trucks, transported to fish farms and tossed live into ponds to be eaten by fish, and thrown while still alive into large grinders. Some baby chicks are also dyed with harmful chemicals and distributed or sold to children. Such animals typically die within a few days. A report including photographs taken at hatcheries in India of the killing of baby chicks is appended as **Annexure 2**.

Such cruel methods of killing unwanted baby chicks are a clear contravention of various provisions of Section 11 of the PCA Act and are punishable under the law. The relevant excerpt from Section 11 is appended as **Annexure 3**.

According to the report on Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics 2019 released by the central government, India ranks third in the world in egg production (as per 2018–2019 figures). Since India is a major player on the world stage, it's especially imperative that its hatcheries be directed immediately to end the use of cruel and illegal practices to kill unwanted chicks and instead adopt methods that are recommended by the AWBI and the Law Commission of India as well as being more palatable to the global public.

Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA Australia
- PETA Foundation (UK)
- PETA France
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA US

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CIN: U74899DL2000NPL103217

In July 2017, the Law Commission of India released Law Commission Report No 269, titled "Transportation and House-Keeping of Egg-Laying Hens (Layers) and Broiler Chickens", wherein the practice of inhumanely killing male baby chicks in the Indian poultry industry was acknowledged. Rule 16 of the draft Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Egg Laying Hens) Rules, 2017, under this report, specifies that "hatcheries shall use animal euthanasia to euthanise male chicks using a combinations of inert gases by the method of controlled atmospheric killing". A copy of the report is appended as **Annexure 4**.

In 2012 and 2014, the AWBI issued two advisories concerning the killing of birds for disease control purposes, which stated that the board supports the use of nitrogen and inert gases to kill these animals and that these methods should be adopted by all states. Copies of the AWBI advisories are appended as **Annexures 5 and 6**, respectively.

In 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare issued the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Egg Laying Hens) Rules, 2019 ("Draft Egg Laying Hens Rules"). Rule 12 mandates that hatcheries use procedures for euthanising chicks prescribed in the guidelines of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). A copy of the Draft Egg Laying Hens Rules is appended as **Annexure 7**.

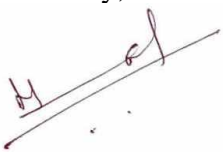
Article 7.6.14 of Chapter 7.6 of the guidelines issued by the OIE – of which India is a member country – also prescribes the use of nitrogen and inert gases for killing poultry, including baby chicks. The relevant excerpt from the OIE guidelines is appended as **Annexure 8**.

In ovo sexing technology is in advanced stages of development. Implementing this technique would prevent the killing of millions of live male chicks by the Indian egg industry each year. The German government, which has invested in this technology, has said that it would be available this year, at which point the mass killing of male chicks will become illegal in Germany. India could – and should – take similar steps.

In light of this information, I respectfully request that the central government, via the Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, take urgent steps to bring *in ovo* sexing technology to India and, until that is done, issue directions to all states and union territories that poultry hatcheries in our country must stop using cruel and illegal methods of killing unwanted baby chicks. Instead, they should adopt the method prescribed by the OIE guidelines (which are also recommended by the AWBI and the Law Commission of India) to handle unwanted chicks.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. I hope to hear from you soon. I can be reached at ManilalV@petaindia.com or on +91 9910817282.

Sincerely,



Manilal Valliyate, CEO
PETA India

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cc: Shri Giriraj Singh, Honourable Minister of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi 110 001