

ABSTRACT

BAN ON CATTLE SLAUGHTER: THE CURRENT DEBATE

***NIRALI DEEPAK PAREKH¹**

The Ministry of Indian Central Government on 23rd May 2017 issued a notification imposing a ban on the sale and purchase of cows and buffaloes in the animal markets for the purpose of slaughter. The notification covers cows, buffaloes, steers, heifers and calves and also camel trade. It also says that if any person is purchasing cattle then that person has to issue an undertaking assuring that the cattle will be used for agricultural purposes and not for the purpose of slaughter. Entry 15 of the State list of the Seventh Schedule is 'Preservation, protection and improvement of stock and prevention of animal diseases; veterinary training and practice. It implies that the state legislatures have absolute powers to formulate or establish laws relating to the prohibition of slaughter and protection of the cattle. Article 48 included in Part IV of the Constitution of India directs the State to prohibit the slaughter of cows, calves and other milch and draught cattle. Currently, about twenty four states in India have their own respective regulations prohibiting either the sale or slaughter of cows. The states in which there are no restrictions on the slaughtering of cows and which do not consider it to be illegal include Kerala, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura as well as Sikkim. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Market Rules), 2017 have been issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The centre's attempt of issuing the notification to regulate the cattle trade and protect the animals from the cruel practices that they are exposed to, has led to protests and outrage in the country as the masses view it as an infringement of their fundamental rights including right to food, right to livelihood, right to privacy, freedom of religion etc.

¹ 4th year, BLS, LL.B, PRAVIN GANDHI LAW COLLEGE, MUMBAI