#### **IVU Online News – October 2010**

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# Interview with a Son of Indonesia Veg Society Founder

Meyrick Sumantri is a son of Mr Bambang Sumantri, the founder and president of the Indonesia Vegetarian Society (IVS), host of the 39<sup>th</sup> IVU World Vegetarian Congress which takes place this month in Jakarta and Bali: www.ivu.org/congress/2010/Jero Wacik.pdf



*Hi, Meyrick. Please tell us a bit about your father and how he became involved with vegetarianism.* 

My father has been vegetarian for the past twenty

years, and over time, our family has followed. So, everyone in my immediate family is now vegetarian. At first, we were reluctant to change our lifestyles, but through many persistent and logical talks together, we eventually gained an understanding of why our father was vegetarian, and why he suggested us to be as well. Today, he still passionately believes in vegetarianism, which is why he continues to vigorously spreading knowledge of the benefits of a vegetarian lifestyle to the Indonesian community.

What about yourself, your brother and sister? Why are you vegetarians?

It's quite interesting because we're all vegetarians for different reasons: my sister for health reasons, my brother for environmental reasons, and myself for ethical reasons. All in all, however, we too believe in the advantages of a vegetarian lifestyle and are passionate in spreading this knowledge.

Indonesian Vegetarian Society (IVS) is an impressive organisation with 10s of thousands of members and approximately 50 chapters around the country. What was your father's role in the founding and growth of IVS?

One day, in 1998, my father decided that it was time for him to spread vegetarianism on a larger scale. He always says that if you passionately believe in something and have the knowledge that will benefit yourself and others, it becomes your responsibility to share this knowledge. And so he and a group of passionate fellow vegetarians formed the *Keluarga Vegetarian Maitreya Indonesia*, which translates to the Indonesian Maitreya Society. In 2006, the organization's name was changed to the Indonesian Vegetarian Society, as we wanted to also include those that were not Maitreya (Buddhist) related in our activities.

# Your father also started a hospital that serves vegetarian food exclusively. Please tell us a bit about that.

Aligned with his vision of spreading the benefits of vegetarianism on a larger scale, my father decided to turn Royal Progress Hospital into the first vegetarian hospital in the country. He wasn't sure at first how the general public would react, because at that time – in 1992 – the concept of vegetarianism was relatively new to Indonesia outside of the Buddhist community. But he learned that by taking time to truly share with our team of doctors, employees, and patients the health benefits of vegetarianism that they would eventually see for themselves the benefits of having a vegetarian hospital. All of our patients and the 1,000 hospital employees are now more than satisfied with the vegetarian menu served. With food, it all comes down to taste; so, we had to take the extra step in putting together a talented kitchen staff capable of serving exceptionally delicious and healthy vegetarian food.

# What about your own perspective as a person in his 20s? What about the eating habits and perspectives of your contemporaries?

Well, initially, I turned vegetarian for ethical reasons. Today, after having attended many seminars and talks related to the topic, I realize all the other reasons for me to remain vegetarian.

#### Do you notice much change?

I feel that my energy levels – on a day-to-day basis – are much higher and that I have more stamina in sports. I love the outdoors, and keep myself busy with soccer, tennis, and beach volleyball. I find that being vegetarian actually helps my stamina levels. In Indonesia, there's the notion that being vegetarian makes you feel weak. So, it's important for us to educate the public that if vegetarianism is done right (i.e., a well planned, healthy balanced diet) there's a lot it can do for one's physical endurance.

# What is your family's vision for the future of IVS and of the vegetarian movement in Indonesia?

We are so blessed to have such a devoted, motivated, and bright group of individuals supporting this organization. The vision is quite simple – to share our knowledge of vegetarianism as best we can, so that the general public can make *informed* decisions about their dietary lifestyles.

# Putting a Veg Spin on Holidays

Meat features prominently in many holidays world. Here is an example from Chile of how veg\*n activists are seeking to start new traditions. In Chile, the country's independence from Spain is celebrated on 18-19 Sep, with meat eating playing a major role.

To begin a new way to celebrate their country's independence, activists in the Chilean Vegetarian Vegan Society created a party with much the same food, but the vegan versions. They call the event the 'Vegan Fonda of the Vegetarian Huaso' (loosely translated as The Vegan National Independence Day Party of the Chilean Cowboy). The first fonda was in 2006, and it was such a success – with lots of people attending and lots of media coverage - that it has been repeated every year since.



Here you can view videos and photos: <u>huasovegetariano.blogspot.com</u>



### **Tina Fox Elected IVU Fellow**

Tina Fox needs no introduction to the leaders of IVU member societies, who will undoubtedly agree that she is very deserving of her recent election as an IVU Fellow. (For more on Fellows www.ivu.org/members/council/fellows.html)

From 1980 to about 1995, Tina ran Wirral Animal Rights. In 1995, she became Chief Executive of the Vegetarian Society UK after having served as a trustee for the same organisation for a couple of years. She was elected to the IVU Council at

the Thailand Congress in 1999, became Deputy Chair in 2000 and then Chair of the IVU International Council in 2002.

Tina stepped down as VSUK Chief Executive in 2006, the same year that she was appointed to Vegetarian for Life (now Director), and has now decided to step down from the IVU Council.

Recently, Tina kindly agreed to be interviewed for IVU Online News.

Hi Tina. First off, who is the gentleman with you in the photo?

Tony Banks was a vegetarian Labour MP in the UK, who fought very hard for the animals - anti hunt, anti vivisection, etc. and worked to improve the vegetarian catering at the House of Commons. He died unexpectedly about 6-7 years ago, and the animals lost a very good friend.

When and why did you first decide to become a vegetarian activist?

Almost as soon as I went vegetarian (for ethical reasons) in 1972, I became a member of the Vegetarian Society UK and started up my own local group -

Ostrich - so called because we were trying to pull people's heads out of the sand in relation to animal exploitation.

What was the public perception of vegetarianism at that time?

That we were all wacky weirdos!

What was one of your most fulfilling moments promoting vegetarianism?

Two really, first of all putting on our group's first major event in Liverpool with lectures, food tasting stands, etc., and the second, much later, when I organised the IVU World Vegetarian Congress in Edinburgh.

We all learn from our mistakes. What is one example from your own experience?

I have learned as I get older that it is so important to promote the message positively. Making people feel guilty about animal cruelty or their diet never works, as they shy away from you, and I am sure I was guilty of that when I was younger and probably more aggressive!

# Who is one of your heroes from the vegetarian movement? What can we learn from that person?

I don't think I have just one particular person. I admire Gandhi a great deal for his persistence and willingness to suffer for the vegetarian and other causes, and I also admire George Bernard Shaw, as he used humour, and I think that is a very valuable tool in our armoury.

#### You have spent a lot of time leading organisations, such as Vegetarian Society UK. What is one piece of advice you have for other leaders?

Listen to those you are working with, whether it is staff, members, trustees, whoever and try to be positive as much as possible. Also, try to make your organisation a supportive one rather than one putting out lots of critical press, etc. We find this is particularly the case with Vegetarian for Life - people working in the care sector are often underpaid and overworked, so criticising them for poor catering won't achieve anything, but giving them easy veg\*n recipes and showing them you understand their budgetary and other difficulties works wonders.

What do you see as an important strategy for veg activists going forward?

Again, use positive messages wherever possible and at present use people's concerns for the planet and their pocket as a springboard to promote the message that vegetarianism is good for the planet, their health and their pockets.

What most worries you about the future of vegetarianism?

That it can't come quick enough to save lots of animals from suffering.

What about IVU specifically? What changes have you seen, and what future changes do you expect?

I have seen IVU grow and become much more inclusive, and I expect this to continue. It is great to be part of such a worldwide family.

The current project closest to your heart is Vegetarian for Life. Please tell us about that.

Vegetarian for Life was set up in 2007 specifically to help older vegetarians and vegans in the UK. We work closely with all the other UK vegetarian and vegan groups and also with age related groups such as Age UK, WRVS and Dignity in Care. We started off by producing a Catering Guide for Care homes which we sent to 14,000 UK care homes and sheltered schemes and also to nearly 3000 home care agencies.

We also set up the UK List of Veg\*n Friendly Care Homes - we started off with just 100 in May 2008 and now have 316 and expect to have many more. This helps anyone looking for a care home or sheltered scheme in the UK know where there is one in their preferred location that will take their dietary needs seriously.

Following that, we produced a guide for individual older vegetarians and vegans and also set up a grant scheme to help them stay in their own homes. For example, earlier this year, we gave a grant to a 74 year old so she could get a stair lift - this enabled her to come out of a nursing home and return to independent living. We set up catering courses for care caterers in partnership with Cordon Vert (the VSUK's cookery school) and have so far carried out six very successful courses with four more at least in the pipeline.

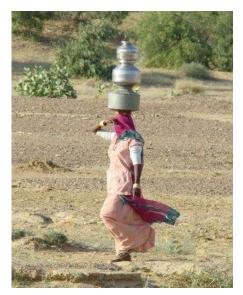
We attend lots of exhibitions, etc. relevant to the work, such as the Incredible Veggie Show in Brighton, the Retirement Show and Primary Care Exhibition and are involved in some work with the UK National Health Service. The work has grown a great deal since we set up, and all this with just one part time member of staff - me! We are also fortunate in having a small but active board of committed trustees who put a lot of time and energy into the project, and I am sure it will continue to grow in strength and influence. see: www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk

#### **Meat Wastes Water**

Clean water for drinking and other human needs such as irrigation is a precious and increasingly scarce resource. Indeed, the increasing scarcity of water is one more reason to promote vegetarianism.

Meat production not only pollutes water, due to the huge amount of liquid and solid waste produced by the animals whom we eat, meat production also uses more water than does the growing of plant foods.

Many readers of *IVU Online News* are aware that environmentalists calculate people's carbon



footprints, but many of our readers may not be aware that environmentalists also calculate our water footprints: <a href="http://www.waterfootprint.org/?page=files/productgallery">www.waterfootprint.org/?page=files/productgallery</a>

For instance, according to the Water Footprint website, it requires 70 litres of water to grow an apple and 80 litres for 2 slices of wheat bread, but 1937 litres for 1/8 kg of beef and 487 litres of water for 1/8 kg of chicken.

All the water footprint calculations presented in the product gallery (on the footprints of products such as rice and beef) on the Water Footprint website were calculated by the people who maintain the site. Details can be found in the different reports in their publications list or in the report "The Water Footprint of Nations" which covers a variety of products.

Links are also provided for each product. These links provide additional information on that specific product, all sorts of things, especially on its supply chain. Links offer complementary information thought to be of interest.

Does anyone know other water footprint resources?

### **Footprint Calculators Promote Steps Towards Meatlessness**

Our environmental footprint is one way to measure our impact on the environment. There are now many online footprint calculators that include meat consumption as one factor in calculating our environmental impact.



Here are several (some are more fun than others):

- www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator
- <u>www.greenprogress.com/carbon\_footprint\_calculator.php</u>
- www.foodcarbon.co.uk/calculator.html
- <u>www.conservation.org/act/live\_green/Pages/ecofootprint.aspx</u>
- <u>www.endangeredearth.org/climateneutral/carboncalcc/carboncalcc.htm</u>
- <u>www.EatLowCarbon.org</u>

Can you recommend others?



### Why Not Start a Blog?

The internet offers so many ways for veg activists to reach out to others, including Facebook and Twitter. Blogs are another such way. It's easy and inexpensive to start a blog. Plus, anyone who can do word processing can blog; no technical knowledge needed.

Here are some of the veg blogs in Singapore with the bloggers' intros.

1. <u>crystalbyblog.blogspot.com</u> (TheModernVegetarian)

"With over 700 delicious yet easy-to-do receipes ... Anyone can cook ... Let's cook!"

#### 2. <u>ilovemyveg.blogspot.com</u>

"'As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields'. Food featured will not comprise of any of the five spices (i.e.: onion, garlic, chives, shallot, leek) but may contain dairy products as I am a lacto-ovo vegetarian".

#### 3. vegbuzz.blogspot.com

"Vegetarian since 2008, transitioning vegan since 2010. Still grappling if veganism can be practiced in its pure form hence transitioning. This blog is not only about my first love, FOOD, but also to provide information on what's happening in the vegetarian/vegan world. Enjoy!"

#### 4. thehungryangmo.blogspot.com

"My main incentive for this blog is to share my love for vegetarian food with the rest of Singapore! I am from England, so this blog will give an ang mo perspective of where the best food is to be found in Singapore. Also i may write blogs in relation to ethical vegetarianism, and the global and personal impact caused through gluttonous meat based diets. Hope you enjoy! I have been a ovo-lacto vegetarian for 12 years now".

5. <u>living-vegan.blogspot.com</u>

"Life of a vegan in Singapore and interesting vegan and vegetarian related stuff"

6. <u>jschua80.wordpress.com</u> and <u>http://blog.omy.sg/jsvegetarian</u> Vegetarian@Singapore – Some in Mandarin, some in English.

## TV Advert Questions Fast Food Meat

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine – <u>www.pcrm.org</u> - conducts research and public education related to the links between health and consumption of animal foods. Recently,



they put together an incisive television advert that should cause many people to question whether meat burgers are the right choice. www.pcrm.org/news/commercial targets mcdonalds high-fat fare 100914.html

If you know of other adverts or <u>short</u> videos to share, in English or any other language, please let us know.



# Defending the Meat-Global Warming Link

As evidence has grown about the link between meat production and global warming, defenders of meat have been trying to attack the messengers. Veg activists need to be aware of these attacks and how to counter them.

A key scientific advocate of meat reduction, and a

vegetarian himself, is Dr R.K. Pachauri, head of the Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change, the co-winners of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. An address by Dr Pachauri helped inspire Ghent, Belgium's city government to launch a Veggie Thursday campaign, a move that is being followed by cities globally, each in its own way.

A veg activist named Caddy Lung, who works on the Meat Free Monday Platform in Taiwan, sent this compilation of useful links, which we can use to counter the smear campaigns against Dr Pachauri, IPCC and others who are alerting the public to the danger meat poses for the environment.

#### 1. About Climategate

- www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/nov/20/climate-sceptics-hackersleaked-emails
- <u>seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2011482792</u> climate31.html
- <u>www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/conspiracy-theories-</u> <u>finally-laid-to-rest-by-report-on-leaked-climate-change-emails-2021222.html</u>
- 2. About the "conflict of interest" personal attack on Mr. Pachauri
  - <u>www.guardian.co.uk/environment/interactive/2010/aug/26/kpmg-review-</u> pachauri-accounts
  - www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/aug/26/rajendra-pachauri-clearedfinancial-dealings
  - www.telegraph.co.uk/news/7957631/Dr-Pachauri-Apology.html

(Apology letter from Telegraph Daily)

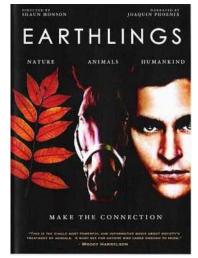
3. About the error on Himalayan Glaciers

- <u>www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jan/20/himalayan-glaciers-melt-</u> <u>claims-false-ipcc</u>
- www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jan/29/ipcc-rajendra-pachauriglaciers
- www.greencarcongress.com/2010/08/iac-20100831.html
- www.guardian.co.uk/environment/cif-green/2010/sep/03/rajendra-pachauriipcc

## 'Earthlings' Day – 5 Dec

'Earthlings' is a powerful documentary describing the many ways that we humans are sometimes less than kind to our fellow earthlings, the other animals. Of course, meat is a big part of that.

To promote the film, Sun, 5 Dec, will be Earthlings Day. People are encouraged to set up showings anywhere they can to whomever they can, even if it's just showing the film to someone on a laptop. BTW, you can download the film for free at www.earthlings.com/earthlings/video-full.php



Also, you can publish your events of whatever size on the Earthlings' Facebook group: <u>www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=356848605446</u>

Here's what a meat eating Singapore graduate student wrote about how the documentary has raised the paradox in his mind about enjoying meat but hating the effects of meat eating (he is urging his fellow students to do a project that would encourage meat reduction) :

*I must say that I am pretty fired up about this project because it harps on my personal interest. I am sharing a link with you guys on a vid called "Earthlings". Some of you may have heard of it as it has been around for sometime. Pretty much sums up most of the conventional arguments against eating meat the way we do.* 

At this point I would like to say that, I love meat, however I abhor the way animals are treated and thus I believe that Veggie Thursday is a terrific platform to spread this sort of awareness.

By the way, one of the producers of *Earthlings*, vegetarian actress Maggie Q, has a new tv show: <u>www.tvfanatic.com/2010/09/nikita-review-kill-jill</u>



#### **Discussing Veg: Two Controversies**

1. George Monbiot's articles had previously promoted veganism, but recently his opinion changed. Here is a response

www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/sep/14/vega n-diet-health-planet

2. If you enjoy controversies, here's more. Patricia Tricker of the UK Vegan Society passed along this link -<u>www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYYNY2oKVWU</u> - for a 45minute conversation between Peter Singer and Richard Dawkins. Patricia also kindly passed along this summary and commentary.

Singer says that eating oysters may be acceptable for people who want to be vegetarians. He criticizes Dawkins for eating meat, saying it promotes and encourages speciesism. Dawkins replies there is a major moral issue in eating meat but he does it because he goes along with it just as he goes along with Christmas although he is an atheist. Singer and Dawkins place humane treatment of animals in the context of Darwinism and also discuss the ethics of killing crippled babies who are beyond recovery. Well worth watching. Anyone who "goes along with Christmas" is not a real atheist, so that's Richard Dawkins off my GoodwishesfortheSolstice-card list!

## **Welcome to New IVU Members**

**Photsawat Kosithanont** – Patron – on behalf of Bangkok International Vegetarian Association (BIVA) <u>www.bangkokvegetarian.org</u>





Veg Products Expo and Business Forum -www.vegproductsexpo.com- A Business Trade Event for Vegan,Vegetarian & Cruelty-free Products June 14-15, 2011 - AustinConvention Center, Austin, TX - Phone: 702-893-9090

**Opti3 Complete Vegan EPA & DHA** - <u>www.opti3omega.com</u> - Opti3 complete EPA & DHA Omega capsules, Vegan approved, safe and pure.





✓ The Indian Vegan Society will be organising the IVU India, South & West Asia Vegetarian Congress – ISWAveg - (a vegan event) from 30 Oct to 2 Nov at E-Inn - www.e-inn.in - a vegetarian, non-alcoholic, non-smoking, business class hotel in Bangalore, India. Dr. Will Tuttle, author of 'The World Peace Diet', will be a keynote speaker. The theme is 'Practicing Ahimsa: The Core of Our Values".

Among the other confirmed speakers are Dr. B.M. Hegde - <u>www.bmhegde.com</u> - a renowned cardiologist and a votary of vegetarianism and Mr. John Davis (UK), a historian of vegetarianism. PETA founder, Ingrid Newkirk, has agreed to send a representative on her behalf. Vegan Mohan Santanam will present a carnatic vocal music concert on 30 Oct evening. For further information, contact Shankar Narayan at <u>indianvegansociety@rediffmail.com</u>

✓ East Africa Vegetarian Congress – 3-5 Dec, 2010, Nairobi, Kenya. Contact the IVU Regional Coordinator for Africa, Emmanuel Eyoh - <u>nigveganimal@yahoo.com</u>

✓ Middle East Vegetarian Congress, 6-7 Dec - Dubai, UAE. Contact IVU International Council member, Sandhya Prakash - <u>sandhya@meveg.info</u> The Congress will take place during the 8<sup>th</sup> Middle East Natural & Organic Foods Expo 2010, 6-8 Dec - <u>www.naturalproductme.com</u> – which will include 16 booths in a dedicated MEVEG Pavilion.

✓ 2<sup>nd</sup> Latin American Vegetarian Congress in Bolivia – Jan, 2011 – exact place and date to be announced - <u>marly.winckler@gmail.com</u>

**13th International Vegan Festival** – 4-12 Jun, 2011 - Malaga, Spain <a href="http://www.ivu.org/veganfest/2011">http://www.ivu.org/veganfest/2011</a>

✓ 5th Asian Vegetarian Congress – Oct, 2011, Hangzhou, China

# Welcome to Organisations Recently Registered with IVU

AUSTRALIA: Indianbelly - www.indianbelly.com.au BRAZIL: Cadastro-Veg - www.cadastroveg.org CANADA: The Soap Gallery - soap-gallery.com FRANCE: Organic Provence - www.organicprovence.com THAILAND: Foundation of Sang Tham Song Lar - www.vegan-thai.com TURKEY: Freedom to Earth Association - Yeryuzune Ozgurluk Dernegi www.yeryuzuneozgurluk.blogspot.com UK Beyond Skin - Beautiful Ladies Footwear that is cruelty-free - www.beyondskin.co.uk Healthy Living Supper Club - Aylesbury. Buckinghamshire - melody@igmac.co.uk

Seasalt & Passion - Vegetarian cafe restaurant and catering - www.seasaltandpassion.com

#### USA

Boston Vegan Meetup Group - <u>vegan.meetup.com/23</u> Boston Veggie Meetup - <u>www.meetup.com/Boston-VegGIe-Meetup</u> God's Creatures Ministry - <u>Godscreaturesministry.org</u> Potluck Recipes - Food For Life, Yuma, AZ - <u>vegan.pix-e.com</u> **VENEZUELA:** Cebada y Miel - <u>actiweb.es/cebadaymiel</u>

# **Other Online Sources of Veg News**

In addition to *IVU Online News*, there are many other places to go online for general veg-related news, rather than news mostly about one country or one organisation. Here are some.

- 1. Dawn Watch <u>www.dawnwatch.com/alerts.htm</u>
- 2. European Vegetarian Union www.evana.org
- 3. Farmed Animal Net <u>www.farmedanimal.net</u>
- 4. Vegan Outreach <u>www.veganoutreach.org/enewsletter</u>
- 5. VegE-News <u>www.vege-news.com</u>
- 6. VegNews <u>www.vegnews.com</u>
- 7. VegSource <u>www.vegsource.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi</u>
- 8. AnimalConcerns.org doesn't have a newsletter, but they post stories daily at <a href="http://www.animalconcerns.org/categories.html?do=shownews">www.animalconcerns.org/categories.html?do=shownews</a>
- 9. IVU-Veg-News E-Mail List <u>www.ivu.org/news/veg-news</u>

# **Please Send News to IVU Online News**

#### Dear Veg Activist

Please use this newsletter as a way to share your knowledge, ideas and experiences with fellow veg activists.

<u>Thx.</u> --<u>george</u> jacobs - <u>george@vegetarian-society.org</u>

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