RENAULT AND CARLSBERG GROUP CUT TIES WITH FESTIVAL AT WHICH ELEPHANTS ARE BEATEN BLOODY

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PETA Reveals That Captive Elephants Are Hit With Weapons, Forced to 'Play' Polo at Exploitative Event

London – People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has video footage showing handlers viciously beating elephants at the 15th annual Chitwan Elephant Festival in Nepal. In response to seeing the video, Renault, MINISO, Carlsberg Group (maker of Carlsberg beer and Somersby cider), United Beverage (maker of Pulpy fruit juice), Mega Bank, Kumari Bank, JGI (maker of Ruslan Vodka), Chaudhary Group (maker of Wai Wai noodles), Everest Insurance, and Hotel Seven Star have announced that they're ending their association with the festival, but Mount Everest Group and NRNA have taken no action to sever ties with the cruel event.

The disturbing footage shows handlers repeatedly hitting and jabbing elephants on the head and behind their sensitive ears with bullhooks (spear-like weapons with a sharp hook on one end), sticks, and makeshift wooden knives to force them into submission and make them race, give rides, and "play" football and polo. The video shows one elephant being beaten continuously for nearly a minute, and an eyewitness saw another who had watery discharge seeping from one eye, indicating an injury or infection. Observers also documented that many elephants had deep, bloody wounds around their heads and ears. A young girl was seen covering her mouth in shock after witnessing a baby elephant being beaten with a stick.

"Deeply sensitive and intelligent elephants are being used as punchbags at this despicably cruel event," says PETA Director Elisa Allen. "PETA is calling for an end to the event and urging companies to cut ties with this spectacle of suffering immediately."

As this eyewitness video of the captive-elephant industry in Nepal shows, still-nursing baby elephants are dragged from their mothers, immobilised, beaten mercilessly, burned with torches, and gouged with sticks for days at a time. After their spirits are broken, they spend their lives in servitude. When not being used for entertainment, they're frequently kept shackled so tightly that they can barely take a single step in any direction.

Just last year, an explosive PETA exposé of the King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament in Bangkok caused numerous companies to end their sponsorships, and the event later shut down. Elephant-polo tournaments have also reportedly been cancelled in India and Sri Lanka.

Photographs from the investigation are available here. Broadcast-quality video footage from the investigation is available here.

PETA's motto reads, in part, that "animals are not ours to use for entertainment".

For more information, please visit **PETA.org.uk**.

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