



CRUELTY TO ANIMALS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Animal cruelty in India is a serious problem seen in many forms like abandonment, abuse in work and entertainment, and neglect of stray animals. Even though there are laws like the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, these laws are not enforced strongly enough, so people often get away with hurting animals. Factors like lack of awareness and low penalties make it hard to stop this cruelty. Many groups and individuals are trying to raise awareness and push for stricter laws, but they face obstacles like limited resources and public apathy. To truly reduce animal cruelty, India needs stronger laws, better enforcement, and more public understanding and compassion towards animals.

INTRODUCTION

Animal Cruelty remains a big problem across India, highlighting the urgent need for spreading awareness, legislative action and societal change. Treating animals with love and compassion is the moral duty of every individual. However, we often fail to fulfil this duty. Animal cruelty, also known as animal abuse, is the intentional infliction and unintentional harm to animals. This includes Deprivation, Torture, Animal fighting etc. Animal Cruelty includes neglect, physical abuse, and exploitation of animals for entertainment or commercial gain.

Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, “The greatness of the nation is judged by the way it treats its animal”. Animal cruelty means when someone hurts animals, causes unnecessary pain or does not take care.

Art 51 A(g) states that it is the Fundamental Duty of every Indian citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forest lakes and wildlife and to have compassion for living

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creatures. In spite of that numerous incidents of animal cruelty have been brought to light through social media in recent years. Brutal crimes against animals such as the death of a pregnant elephant that ate a pineapple with explosives in it, a dog beaten to death, puppies set on fire, dragging dogs tied to a scooter, rape of a cow, and execution of monkeys are reported from across the country and have caught the social media by storm. Some families buy exotic pets without any knowledge of how to take care of them. This leads to neglect of pets, which further leads to them getting abandoned on the streets.

Some companies use animals for testing medicines, cosmetics, and making textiles to gain profits. This led to the extinction of several species of animals which in turn has affected the ecological balance of our planet.

ANIMAL CRUELTY IN INDUSTRIES

Some industries in India make animals suffer. Dairy farms often keep cows and buffaloes in small spaces, and dirty conditions, forcing them to produce more milk than is healthy. Chickens in poultry farms are kept in small, overcrowded cages, which causes them pain. Elephants and other animals used in festivals and tourism are often trained with harsh methods and can be overworked, leading to injuries and stress.

ANIMAL WELFARE GROUPS AND THEIR WORK

There are many animal welfare organizations and people working hard to save animals, spread knowledge, and push for better enforcement of the laws. Groups like People for Animals (PFA) and Blue Cross of India help rescue animals, provide treatment, and teach people to care for them. Even though these groups do great work, they face problems like not having enough money or workers.

TYPES OF ANIMAL CRUELTY

There are two primary categories of animal cruelty: abuse and neglect.

- **ABUSE** is the intentional harming of an animal through actions such as mutilating.
- **NEGLECT** is a failure to provide adequate care, including access to food and water and veterinary care when needed.

Religious Influences

- **Hinduism:** Hinduism holds a deep respect for all forms of life. The concept of ahimsa, or non-violence, is a core principle, advocating for the protection of animals and the environment.
- **Buddhism:** Similar to Hindu beliefs, Buddhism emphasizes compassion and kindness towards all living beings. The teachings encourage followers to treat animals with respect and avoid causing harm.
- **Jainism:** Jainism takes the principle of non-violence to an extreme, advocating for complete respect for all life forms. Jains often follow strict vegetarian diets and actively promote animal welfare.
- **Islam:** In Islam, animals are considered a part of God's creation, deserving of respect and care. Many teachings emphasize the importance of treating animals kindly.

CHANGING CULTURAL DYNAMICS

While traditional beliefs promote kindness towards animals, modern society often struggles with conflicting attitudes. Urbanization, industrialization, and changing lifestyles can lead to neglect and abuse.

1. **Urbanization:** As cities grow, the issue of stray animals becomes more pronounced. Stray dogs and cows often face neglect and abuse in urban environments.
2. **Consumerism:** The rise of consumer culture has led to increased exploitation of animals for profit, such as in the fashion and entertainment industries.
3. **Cultural Practices:** Certain cultural practices, such as festivals involving animal sacrifices, can perpetuate cycles of cruelty. Changing these practices requires sensitive engagement with communities.

ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

The use of animals for entertainment raises significant ethical concerns.

1. **Circuses:** Animals in circuses endure harsh training methods and live in inadequate conditions. Many are subjected to physical punishment to perform tricks, leading to psychological trauma.
2. **Movies and Television:** Animals used in films and shows may be subjected to stressful environments, dangerous stunts, or neglect. Ensuring their welfare during filming is crucial.
3. **Tourism:** Many tourist attractions exploit animals for rides or photo opportunities. This often leads to neglect and mistreatment of the animals involved.

Research and Testing

Animals are commonly used in research for medical and cosmetic products. This practice raises ethical questions.

1. **Testing Procedures:** Many animals undergo painful procedures for testing products, leading to significant suffering. Advocating for alternative testing methods can reduce reliance on animal testing.
2. **Legislation Changes:** Stronger regulations are needed to ensure that animals used in research are treated humanely. Encouraging transparency in research practices can also promote accountability.

Importance of animals in human life

1. **Food:** Animals provide food for humans, and healthy animals produce products like milk and meat efficiently.
2. **Companionship:** Animals give people love, comfort, and can help improve mental health by reducing loneliness and sadness.
3. **Ecological Balance:** Animals help keep nature balanced by their behaviours like eating, moving, and interacting with their environment.
4. **Medical Research:** Animals are used in research to help develop new medicines and treatments.
5. **Cultural Traditions:** In many cultures, including India, animals play an important role in music, dance, and traditions.

6. Support for People with Disabilities: Service animals, like guide dogs, are very helpful to people with disabilities, improving their daily lives.

India has animal welfare laws, but it lacks due to the following things such as:

1. Few Inspectors: Not enough people to check all farms and markets, especially in remote areas.
2. Low Funding: Lack of money for equipment, inspector training, and transport.
3. Weak Penalties: Fines are too small to stop big farms from breaking the rules.

This leads to:

- Overcrowding: Birds are full in small spaces, causing stress and illness.
- Bad Conditions: Poor air, light, and temperature control.
- Rough Handling: Animals are treated roughly, causing injuries and fear.
- Stronger enforcement is needed to improve animal care.

PENALTIES IN THE PCA (PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT) DO NOT ACT AS A DETERRENT

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act is now a 60-year-old legislation with no major amendments in recent times. Monetary fines imposed for crimes against animals continue to be merged in the range of Rs. 10 to Rs. 100. This could be one reason the legislation has not been able to act as a deterrent to animal cruelty. The government also accepted the Lok Sabha.

The government has received many suggestions, petitions, and requests from various sections of the societies to increase the existing penalties in the PCA Act. The government has also acknowledged that penalties prescribed in the PCA Act are minimal and do not act as a deterrent.

Multiple private member bills were introduced in the parliament including an amendment to increase the penalty. As with all the private member bills, none of them were taken up. Likewise, the 261st Report of the Law Commission laid down some guidelines and listed suggestions in 2015, which have not yet been incorporated. It is high time that India came up

with legislation with stringent provisions to replace the PCA Act. India must also ensure data on cases related to cruelty against animals is properly maintained and made available by the NCRB or other agencies as is the case with other crimes. India can take a cue from other countries like the UK where punishments include a lifetime ban from owning pets, a 51-week maximum jail term, and a penalty of up to £20,000.

SOLUTION

There are various ways that can be used to protect animals from animal cruelty which include-

- Reporting Cruelty
- Demanding strict laws
- Intervening (if you witness any animal cruelty you can intervene)
- Teaching children, and families how to protect animals
- Sheltering. Etc
- Programs for Stray Animals: Spaying, neutering, and vaccinating stray animals can help control their population and keep them healthy.
- Education and Awareness: People need to learn why it is important to treat animals kindly. Schools, community events, and media can help spread this message.

To minimize animal cruelty: as a responsible citizen if you witness any form of animal cruelty, report it to the nearest police station or other authorities. Act immediately to prevent further cruelty. Teach your children to have respect for animals.

Government Initiatives-

- In 2013 Indian Ministry of Environment and Forest banned captive dolphin shows. Dolphins were captured and used for entertainment across the country.

On 13 Nov 2004, India was the first South Asian country to put a ban on the import of animal-tested beauty products.

- A leading Indian airline commits to protecting shark populations and marine ecosystems. Every year thousands of sharks are killed to meet the demand for shark fin soups. After removing fins sharks are thrown back in the sea to die.
- On 14 Nov 2014, the Ministry of Home Affairs ordered to stop the illegal movement of animals to Nepal. According to the Indian government during the Gadhimai festival where over 500,000 animals mostly originating from India were to be sacrificed in Nepal.
- In my opinion we as a individual should understand that animals too have life. We should make society aware of animal rights and make them understand that they too suffer pain like us.

CONCLUSION

Animal cruelty in India is a big problem. Even though India has a long history of being kind to animals, many animals still suffer and are treated badly. This happens in many ways, such as hurting street dogs, not taking care of farm animals, and using animals in circuses or for heavy work.

One reason this happens is that the laws to protect animals are not strong enough. Even though there is a law called the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 it is not followed properly. People who hurt animals often don't get punished much, so they keep doing it. Also, many people do not know that hurting animals is wrong or do not care enough to stop it.

Another problem is that there are too many stray animals, like dogs and cows, on the streets. These animals often do not have enough food, water, or shelter and can get hurt or sick easily. Although there are groups that help stray animals, they don't always have enough money or people to help all the animals that need it.

Hurting animals is not just bad for the animals; it can also be bad for people. Stray animals that are not treated well can become sick or even aggressive, which can be dangerous for people. Also, treating farm animals badly can cause diseases that might spread to humans.

To stop animal cruelty, India needs to take better care of its animals. This means making sure the laws to protect animals are followed and punishing those who break them. People should learn why it is important to be kind to animals. More programs should help take care of stray animals by giving them food, medicine, and a safe place to live.

In short, everyone needs to work together to make sure animals are treated well. The government, schools, animal rescue groups, and people should help each other to make India a place where animals are safe and respected. Being kind to animals is not only good for them but also helps make our world a better place for everyone.

Stopping animal cruelty in India needs teamwork from everyone government, animal groups, and the public. Stronger laws, better education, and more support for shelters can make a big difference. If people work together, animals can be treated with kindness and respect. It may take time, but with effort and care, India can become a place where all animals are protected and loved.

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