

INDIAN LAWS AND DOMESTIC PETS

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One often sees pets ill treated and abused by pet owners, but these are rarely punished by law. It is time that we take note of this by being aware of the laws that protect pets.

Responsible pet ownership is not just desirable, it is required under the law. Under the Prevention of Cruelty To Animals Act 1960 (PCA) all of the following are punishable offences:

Beating, kicking, overriding, torturing or causing any animal pain or suffering by the owner or any other person. (Section 11 Clause 1a).

This means you may not hit or hurt your pet or any other animal. Offenders may be reported to the police. The penalty is a fine of Rs 100/-or jail up to three months or both.

Here is a list of several other acts of cruelty that are punishable under law:

1. Caging or confining an animal in a cage or enclosure too small to allow reasonable movement (Section 11 Clause 1e).

Offenders may be reported to the police. The penalty is a fine of Rs 100 and jail up to 3 months or both.

2. Tying with a short or very heavy chain (Section 11 Clause 1f).

Penalty is a fine of RS 100 and up to 3 months in jail or both.

3. Keeping the animal constantly confined or tied for extended periods thereby denying it the opportunity to exercise.(Section 11Clause 1g).

Punishable with a fine of RS 100/- and up to 3 months in jail or both.

4. Failure to provide sufficient food and water to a pet animal (Section 11 Clause 1h).

Penalty is a fine of RS 100/- and up to 3 months in jail or both.

5. Failure to provide proper shelter (Section 11 Clause 1f, Section 1 and Section 3).

This means failure to provide protection from the external environment e.g. leaving a dog out in the rain or cold, or no access to shade in summer. Penalty is a fine of RS 100/- and up to 3 months in jail or both.

6. Placing an animal in circumstances that are likely to endanger its life and cause its death from starvation or thirst.

This means abandoning an animal in unfamiliar territory or in sickness or old age is illegal. Penalty is a fine of Rs 100/- and up to 3 months in jail.

7. Maiming or injuring an animal in any way. Any surgical or invasive procedure without anesthesia. This would include ear or tail docking.

It is a cognisable offence under Section 428/429 of the Indian Penal Code. The penalty is a fine and up to 5 years in jail.

8. Inadequate health care. This includes lack of timely and appropriate veterinary treatment (Section 11 Clause 1j and Section 3).

Using an animal for the purpose of animal fights / contests (E.g. cockfights, oxen races, dog races) or baiting. This is a cognisable offence under Section 11(1.9n)

9. Offering for sale or possessing any animal which is suffering from mutilation, starvation, thirst, overcrowding or other ill treatment.

This makes it illegal to over-breed dogs or keep pups for sale in poor conditions (Section 11k).

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