

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 - Summary

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 is the central law in India enacted to prevent the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals. It forms the legal foundation for all animal welfare regulations in the country.

1. Objective:

- To prevent cruelty to animals.
- To establish an Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI).

2. Definitions:

- Animal: Any living creature other than a human being.
- Owner: Any person who has possession or custody of an animal.

3. Prohibited Acts (Section 11):

- Beating, kicking, overdriving, overloading, or torturing an animal.
- Employing sick, injured, or unfit animals for labor.
- Keeping animals in overcrowded or insufficiently ventilated spaces.
- Mutilation, killing of animals using cruel methods.

4. Exceptions:

- Medical or scientific experiments on animals (regulated separately).
- Religious slaughter practices.

5. Penalties:

- First offense: Fine up to -50.
- Second or subsequent offense: Fine -25-100 or imprisonment up to 3 months or both.

6. Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI):

- Advises the government on animal welfare laws.
- Promotes animal welfare awareness and funding for animal shelters.

7. Enforcement:

- Police and designated officers have the authority to stop cruelty.
- Citizens can report cruelty; courts can issue orders against offenders.

8. Miscellaneous:

- Enables framing of specific rules for breeding, transport, housing, and sale of animals.
- Forms the base for rules like Dog Breeding Rules, Pet Shop Rules, etc.

This Act has been the foundation of India's progressive animal protection ecosystem and continues to evolve with updated rules and regulations under its scope.