

INDIA: 'Paws-itive' Move - All Animals Are 'Legal Persons' & All Citizens Their Guardians, Declares

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In an attempt to work towards animal welfare, Haryana and Punjab have taken a really good step. There has been many cases of animal cruelty in past few months and trust me they are very disturbing.

To curb this, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has accorded the status of "legal person or entity" to animals in Haryana giving them the corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person.

The verdict comes nearly a year after Uttarakhand High Court passed a similar order to "protect and promote greater welfare of animals". Both of the orders were written by Justice Rajiv Sharma, who was transferred from Uttarakhand to the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Stating that animals cannot be treated as "objects" or "property" and are entitled to justice, the verdict reads, "The corporations, Hindu idols, holy scriptures, rivers have been declared legal entities and thus, in order to protect and promote greater welfare of animals including avian and aquatic, animals are required to be conferred with the status of legal entity/ legal person.

The animals should be healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behavior without pain, fear and distress. They are entitled to justice. The animals cannot be treated as objects or property."

Justice Sharma said, "All the citizens throughout the state of Haryana are hereby declared persons in loco parentis (meaning "in the place of a parent") as the human face for the welfare/protection of animals."

We hope more states follow this!

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