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Megha Middha, is working as an Assistant Professor of Law in Mody University of Science and Technology, Lakshmangarh, Sikar (Rajasthan). She has an experience in the teaching of almost 3 years. She has completed her graduation in BBA LL.B (H) from Amity University, Rajasthan (Gold Medalist) and did her post-graduation (LL.M in Business Laws) from NLSIU, Bengaluru. Currently, she is enrolled in a Ph.D. course in the Department of Law at Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur (Rajasthan). She wishes to excel in academics and research and contribute as much as she can to society. Through her interactions with the students, she tries to inculcate a sense of deep thinking power in her students and enlighten and guide them to the fact how they can bring a change to the society

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Assistant professor of Law

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Avinash Kumar



Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship. He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi. Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. He has qualified UGC - NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR - Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.

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ROLE OF JUDICIARY IN ANIMAL RIGHTS

AUTHORED BY - SHRUTI ANAND

ABSTRACT

The paper begins with highlighting the role of forest in conservation of fauna and how much harm deforestation can directly and indirectly cause to ecosystem. Furthermore the challenges and laws with respect to deforestation will also be discussed in the paper. Centre to the project is an depth analysis about all the landmark cases which created significant impact on animal rights. In a leading case, the scope of article-21 was extended to include animal rights within its ambit. Laws like article 48, 48A and 51A(g) of Indian Constitution also work for animal rights. Furthermore we will be also discussing in details about the legislations which would involve both criminal and civil liability, which have been enacted for animals. The paper will also consist of how non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups, and public interest lawsuits have influenced the legal debate around animal rights. In conclusion, the paper investigate about the challenges and limitations that the judiciary faces while upholding the animal rights along with examining issues like legal standing for animals, enforcement hurdles, and the balance between animal rights and other societal interests.

Keywords- Animal rights, legislations, judiciary, protection, Judgement

INTRODUCTION

The ethical treatment of animals has become a crucial issue in contemporary society and so the global legal systems are working to achieve balance in between the complicated interaction of people and animals, which cuts over economic, cultural, and geographic barriers. The judiciary's involvement in interpreting and upholding legislation intended to protect animals' rights and welfare has expanded along with public awareness of animal welfare. Judiciary has a significant impact in Preserving Animal Rights, through legal judgments the courts have shaped the language, practices, and policies around animal rights. The paper aims to investigate and critically assess the vital function that legal systems provide in defending and advancing the rights and welfare of animals. The variety of natural resources in India is enormous, millions of people rely on the country's diverse plants and animals to survive. Consequentially safeguarding the native flora and fauna is urgently required. The ethical and moral treatment of animals has been

increasingly popular in recent years, sparking cultural and legal debates over the necessity of strong legal protections for animals against exploitation, abuse, and neglect.

India, a nation celebrated for its cultural diversity, historical significance, and abundant biodiversity, has also been at the forefront of the global conversation on animal rights and welfare. The role of the Indian judiciary in protecting and promoting the rights of animals has become increasingly vital in recent years. One area that has received considerable attention and focus over the years in the context of ever-changing social ethics and values has been the recognition and protection of animal rights. The role of judges in monitoring animal welfare and rights has become increasingly important. The concept of animal rights includes the idea that animals are entitled to certain basic protections and certain moral considerations similar to those afforded to humans. This paradigm shift from treating animals as mere property up to the redemption of their inherent value for a broad legal framework aimed at the protection of their interests. The need to protect animal rights stems from the natural vulnerability of animals to human domination and abuse. While historically, humans have viewed animals as resources for food, labour, entertainment and experimentation, the modern understanding of animal rights recognizes that animals have the capacity to suffer and enjoy. This understanding has led to laws and regulations aimed at preventing unnecessary harm and suffering. The achievement of animal rights legislation is a testament to society's deep concern for animal welfare. Historically, animals were legally regarded only as commodities, with few legal protections. However, as ethical knowledge and scientific knowledge of animal psychology and suffering have advanced, legal systems have adapted to reflect these changing attitudes. The history of India reflects the deep-rooted relationship between humans and animals, reflected in ancient texts and traditions that foster faith in all living things.

The history of India reflects the deep-rooted relationship between humans and animals, reflected in ancient texts and traditions that foster faith in all living things. This cultural custom laid the foundation for modern conservation efforts in India. The country introduced the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA Act) in 1960. The act marked a milestone by proposing a legislative framework for animal welfare to prevent cruelty and suffering to animals on the snow. But as social awareness increased and global standards evolved, the PCA was amended in 1982 to strengthen security and add a wider range of supports to its operation. Subsequent amendments in 1986 and 1995 respectively further expanded animal welfare measures, and animals were recognized as sentient beings worthy of protection. The constitutional amendments reflected

India's commitment to ethical expression of animals and established the judiciary as the primary enforcers of these laws While India continues to evolve culturally and legally in its approach to animal rights, the judiciary remains a powerful force in ensuring that animals are treated with compassion and dignity.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

While the Constitution of India does not explicitly provide for "animal rights", there are provisions and principles that contribute to the protection and indirect welfare of animals, basic constitutional provisions and principles of on animal rights in India here:

Article-21 sets out the Right to Life, expressing that: No individual will be denied of his life or individual freedom besides as indicated by system laid out by regulation. With regards to basic entitlements, the Supreme Court has brought a few basic entitlements under the ambit of the right to life through an extensive perusing on account of Creature Government assistance Leading body of India v. A. Nagaraja and Ors. (the Jallikattu case)

Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):

Article 48 of the DPSP within the Indian Constitution locations an emphasis on animal welfare and safety. It states: *"The State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter, of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle."*

While this provision specially pertains to the preservation of farm animals, it reflects the broader principle of selling animal welfare through current and scientific practices. The "prohibiting the slaughter" clause underscores the importance of defensive certain categories of animals.

Article 48A - Article 48A lays down the directive principle for protection and improvement of environment and safeguarding of forests and wildlife.

Article 51A(g) read as follows: "It shall be the duty of every citizen of India:

(g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures."

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Rules, 2001: These guidelines were outlined under

the PCA Act, giving itemized guidelines to the treatment of creatures in different settings, including transportation, butcher, and the working of creature markets.

Transport of Creatures Rules, 1978: These principles under the PCA Act set down rules for the vehicle of creatures to guarantee their compassionate treatment during travel.

Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI): It is a statutory body established under the PCA Act. Its primary role is to promote animal welfare and advise the government on matters related to animal protection.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960: This is the primary legislation governing the prevention of cruelty to animals in India. It addresses acts of cruelty, such as beating, overworking, or neglecting animals. Some key provisions include:

- Prohibiting the cruel treatment of animals and prescribing penalties for violations.
- Regulating the use of animals in performances and exhibitions.
- Establishing guidelines for the care and management of animals in captivity.
- Regulating the transportation of animals to prevent cruelty during transit.

Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: This law is aimed at protecting wildlife and their habitats. It classifies species into different schedules, providing varying degrees of protection. Some provisions include:

- Banning the hunting, poaching, and trade of endangered species.
- Regulating the capture and ownership of wild animals.
- Creating protected areas and national parks for wildlife conservation.

The Indian Penal Code

Section 428 – This section states that the person shall be punished with imprisonment, if he kills, poison, maim or render any animal which is of worth more than ten rupees.

Section 429- Whoever commits mischief by killing, harming, disfiguring or delivering pointlessly, any elephant, camel, horse, donkey, bison, bull, cow or bull, anything that might be the worth thereof, or some other creature of the worth of fifty rupees or upwards, will be reoffended with detainment of one or the other portrayal for a term which might stretch out to five years, or with fine, or with both.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH JUDICIAL INTERPRETATION

*Animal Welfare Board of India v. A. Nagaraja & Ors*¹

In the case of *Animal Welfare Board of India v. A. Nagaraja & Ors*, the Supreme Court of India addressed the issue of animal cruelty in the context of 'jallikattu', a traditional bull-taming sport, and bullock cart races, particularly prevalent in the state of Tamil Nadu.

The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) petitioned the court, contending that these activities violated the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and caused unnecessary suffering to the animals involved. The AWBI argued that the practices involved mistreatment and abuse of bulls, contravening the principles of animal welfare enshrined in the legislation.

The respondents, including various organizations and individuals associated with the conduct of jallikattu and bullock cart races, defended the traditions on cultural and economic grounds, asserting their right to preserve and continue these activities.

After a thorough examination of the arguments and evidence presented by both parties, the Supreme Court delivered its judgment on May 7, 2014. The court ruled in favor of the Animal Welfare Board of India, holding that jallikattu and bullock cart races indeed violated the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

Ruling

In its decision, the court emphasized the importance of safeguarding animal welfare and preventing unnecessary suffering, stating that cultural practices could not justify cruelty towards animals. Consequently, the Supreme Court imposed a nationwide ban on jallikattu and bullock cart races, prohibiting their conduct in any form.

The judgment had far-reaching implications, sparking discussions about the balance between cultural traditions and ethical considerations, and underscoring the need for stringent measures to protect animal rights in India.

The Supreme Court found in favor of the AWBI, upholding the implementation of the Jallikattu

¹ (2014) 7 SCC 547.

prohibition. It ruled that Article 51 A (g) of the Constitution is the "magna carta of animal rights" and made additional remarks to protect animals' "life" under Article 21.

Animals' Rights to Life

In relation to Article 21, the Supreme Court specifically stated:

Each specie has a privilege to life and security, as indicated by the law of the country, which incorporates denying it of its presence for human comfort. While safeguarding common freedoms, Article 21 of the Constitution likewise safeguards life. The expression "life" has been extended, and any aggravation from the fundamental climate, which incorporates all types of life, including creature life, that are important for human existence, falls inside the significance of Article 21 of the Constitution. On account of creatures, "life" implies more than basically endurance or presence or utilitarian utility for people, yet having an existence with innate worth, regard, and respect."

*Gauri Maulekhi v. Union of India & Ors.*²

Background:- The case basically worried the inhumane and unlawful transportation of farm animals throughout kingdom borders for slaughter in violation of various animal welfare legal guidelines. Gauri Maulekhi, an animal rights activist, filed a public hobby litigation (PIL) inside the Supreme Court of India to focus on the problem and seek treatments to save you cruelty to animals in the course of transportation. The case revolved across the remedy of cattle at some point of transportation, emphasizing the need to prevent cruelty and suffering to these animals. The respondents inside the case covered the Union of India and various state governments answerable for enforcing animal welfare legal guidelines.

Key Points of the Judgment:

- The Supreme Court, in its judgment, diagnosed the importance of preventing cruelty to animals and upholding their welfare in the course of transportation.
- The courtroom emphasised the want for strict enforcement of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and the Transport of Animals Rules, 1978, to make sure humane remedy at some stage in transportation.

² (2014) 7 SCC 281:

- The judgment laid down precise suggestions and directives to improve the conditions beneath which animals are transported, including provisions for meals, water, and rest for the duration of transit.
- The courtroom confused the want for the creation of tracking committees to supervise the implementation of those pointers.

Outcome:

The "Gauri Maulekhi v. Union of India & Ors." case led to critical directives and pointers to save you cruelty to animals during transportation. It emphasised that the welfare of animals ought to be a paramount consideration and that strict enforcement of animal welfare laws turned into critical. The judgment aimed to enhance the situations beneath which animals have been transported, making sure that their simple needs for food, water, and relaxation had been met. The case highlighted the function of the judiciary in safeguarding animal rights and welfare in India.

Kenel Club of India (KCI) v. Union of India (2013)³

The petitioner advised the Veterinary Committee of India that the Creature Government assistance Affiliation Leading body of India educated them that pups regarding canine varieties like Doberman, Cocker Spaniels, Incredible Danes, Fighters, and others were undeniably exposed to avoidable and superfluous corrective medical procedures. Accordingly, they directed methodology, for example, tail docking, and so on. The Madras High Court found for the veterinary specialists and upset the Pet hotel Club of India's organization to stop cutting pups' ears.

The Court expressed that managing the canine's ears or docking their tails doesn't comprise remorselessness as characterized in that frame of mind of the Anticipation of Mercilessness to Creatures Act, 1960, and that it is altogether up to the proprietors.

CHALLENGES AND CONTROVERSIES

The position of the judiciary in keeping animal rights isn't with out its challenges and controversies. While the judiciary performs a critical role in decoding and implementing laws related to animal welfare, numerous troubles and debates surround its involvement in this domain:

³ AIR 2013 (NOC) (Supp) 1439 (Mad.)

- **Balancing Human vs. Animal Interests:** Controversy arises while courts want to strike a stability between human pastimes, along with cultural practices, financial considerations, or clinical research, and animal rights. Decisions can be challenged whilst they may be perceived as favouring one hobby over the other.
- **Legislative Gaps and Ambiguities:-** Courts regularly face challenges when present animal welfare legal guidelines are unclear or insufficient. The loss of complete regulation can restrict the judiciary's potential to offer powerful treatments for animal cruelty cases.
- **Evolving Legal Status of Animals:** Questions surrounding the criminal repute of animals, whether or not they're considered assets or sentient beings with intrinsic rights, can lead to disputes and ranging interpretations of the regulation.
- **Enforcement Challenges:** Even whilst favourable judgments are introduced, the implementation and enforcement of animal welfare laws can be hard. This can result from aid limitations, corruption, or a lack of expertise amongst law enforcement businesses.
- **Scientific and Ethical Dilemmas:** Cases related to clinical studies, animal testing, and using animals in various industries regularly boost ethical dilemmas. The judiciary ought to navigate those complicated issues even as considering both human and animal interests.
- **Public Opinion and Cultural Practices:** Decisions that have an effect on traditional cultural practices or industries with ancient importance can lead to public backlash and protests. The judiciary may additionally face grievance for its rulings in such instances.
- **Limited Legal Standing for Animals:** Determining who has felony status to symbolize the hobbies of animals in courtroom may be tough. Advocacy companies and people may additionally need to set up their right to bring cases on behalf of animals.
- **Global Trade and Cross-Border Issues:** International alternate in animals and animal products can pose demanding situations in enforcing animal welfare requirements, especially when handling countries with varying stages of safety for animals.
- **Resource Allocation:** Courts may also face aid constraints when dealing with animal rights cases. Allocating time and assets to those instances amid a backlog of different felony subjects can be a contentious difficulty.
- **Clarity in Legal Interpretation:** Different judges may additionally interpret animal welfare legal guidelines in another way, main to inconsistencies in judgments. This can create uncertainty in prison standards for animal protection.
- **Defining Cruelty and Suffering:** Determining what constitutes cruelty and struggling in animals can be subjective. Courts might also need to depend on professional testimony to make knowledgeable decisions, which can be a factor of rivalry.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Exploring animal rights jurisprudence in different nations gives insight into the various methodologies, cultural attitudes, and legal structures that govern animal care and protection. Here's an outline of animal rights jurisprudence in certain countries:

U.S.A

In the United States, animal rights jurisprudence focuses on animal welfare regulations rather than fundamental rights. Animals are typically considered property under the law, with federal and state legislation providing rights against cruelty and abuse. The Animal Welfare Act governs the treatment of animals in study, display, transportation, and sale, whereas each state has its own animal cruelty legislation. Animal experimentation, factory farming techniques, and the use of animals in entertainment are all common topics that spark legal conflicts.

U.K

The United Kingdom has made great advances in animal rights law, acknowledging animals as sentient creatures capable of feeling emotions and feelings. The Animal Wellbeing Act of 2006 offers extensive protection for animals, including provisions for their wellbeing and prohibitions against cruelty and unnecessary suffering. Legal concerns in the United Kingdom frequently revolve around fox hunting, animal experimentation, and animal welfare in agriculture.

European Union

EU member states have enacted comprehensive animal welfare legislation that acknowledge animals as sentient beings and provide treatment guidelines. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognizes animal welfare as an EU policy goal, resulting in substantial laws on animal welfare, farming techniques, and animal testing.

Comparative analysis of judicial approaches to animal protection

Comparative research of judicial methods to animal protection indicates a wide range of legal frameworks and cultural attitudes toward animals across jurisdictions. In nations where animals are recognized as sentient beings or legal people, such as Argentina and New Zealand, courts have taken progressive positions, allowing animals more legal status and rights. These judicial

verdicts frequently result in stronger interpretations of anti-cruelty statutes and more widespread implementation of measures aimed at protecting animal welfare. In contrast, in common law nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom, where animals are considered property under the law, judicial approaches to animal protection are more conservative, focused on conventional legal concepts and limited statutory interpretations.

While courts in these nations may continue to maintain anti-cruelty legislation, they frequently confront difficulties in reconciling opposing interests, such as economic factors in agriculture and industry, with animal welfare concerns. Overall, the efficacy of judicial approaches to animal protection is determined by a complex interaction of legal, cultural, and sociological issues, underlining the importance of continual discourse and activism to improve animal rights and welfare across the world.

CONCLUSION

Concluding the topic, the position of the judiciary in maintaining animal rights is of paramount significance in ensuring the humane treatment and protection of animals. Throughout history, the judiciary has played an essential function in deciphering and enforcing legal guidelines and guidelines associated with animal welfare. Its choices have had a profound impact on shaping the criminal landscape for animals.

The judiciary's position in maintaining animal rights is characterised via numerous key factors:

- **Interpretation of Existing Laws:** The judiciary translates and applies current animal welfare legal guidelines and guidelines to unique cases, ensuring that the criminal framework is consistently upheld. This consists of figuring out what constitutes cruelty to animals and ensuring that violators are held accountable.
- **Creating Legal Precedents:** Through landmark judgments, the judiciary establishes legal precedents that set the standards for the treatment of animals. These precedents guide future cases and make contributions to the improvement of robust animal welfare jurisprudence.
- **Balancing Interests:** Courts often face the assignment of balancing the hobbies of animals with the ones of humans, together with cultural practices, monetary issues, and clinical studies. Striking a truthful stability even as upholding animal rights can be a complicated but essential challenge.

- Addressing Legislative Gaps: When current laws are insufficient or doubtful, the judiciary can interpret and clarify prison provisions, urging legislatures to enact greater complete legislation wherein vital.
- Public Awareness and Accountability: Judicial choices on animal rights cases frequently boost public cognizance and function a shape of accountability for individuals and entities that interact in cruelty to animals. They ship a clear message that animal welfare is a matter of legal importance.
- Encouraging Advocacy: The judiciary's involvement in animal rights cases can inspire advocacy agencies, individuals, and prison experts to work toward improving animal welfare laws and practices.

However, the role of the judiciary in preserving animal rights isn't with out its demanding situations and controversies. Balancing competing hobbies, addressing felony ambiguities, and navigating moral dilemmas are some of the complex issues confronted by means of the judiciary on this subject. Public opinion, cultural practices, and useful resource boundaries also pose demanding situations.

In the face of these challenges, it's miles important for the judiciary to remain committed to the ideas of justice, fairness, and the protection of the prone, including animals. Society's evolving understanding of animal sentience and rights underscores the significance of a judiciary this is receptive to converting values and aware of rising troubles in animal **welfare**.

Strengthening legal mechanisms to safeguard animal rights necessitates a holistic strategy that tackles legislative gaps, improves enforcement capacities, raises public awareness, and develops international collaboration. Here are some recommendations to increase legal procedures for safeguarding animal rights:

Legislative reform

- Update and broaden present animal welfare regulations to match current scientific understanding of animal consciousness and needs.
- Introduce formal recognition of animals as sentient beings or legal persons to give them more legal status and rights.
- Implement broad restrictions on inhumane practices including animal testing for cosmetics, fur farming, and live animal exports.

- To increase agriculture's animal welfare standards, implement stronger rules on industrial farming operations.

Implementing these ideas will allow governments and stakeholders to collaborate to develop legal frameworks for safeguarding animal rights and foster a more compassionate and ethical connection between people and animals.

Public Awareness and Education:

- Launch public awareness initiatives to educate people about animal welfare concerns and encourage ethical pet ownership.
- Incorporate animal welfare education into school curricula to create empathy and care for animals from a young age.
- Encourage media sources to cover animal welfare concerns and highlight successful rescue tales in order to increase awareness and encourage positive change.
- Collaborate with animal welfare organizations, veterinarians, and community groups to give pet owners with resources and assistance while also promoting humane animal care.

International Cooperation

- Strengthen international animal-protection treaties and agreements, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standards.
- Encourage cross-border collaboration and information sharing on animal welfare concerns such as wildlife trafficking, illicit trade in exotic pets, and transnational animal cruelty.
- Support capacity-building projects in developing nations that aim to improve animal welfare standards and enforcement skills through technical assistance, training programs, and best practice sharing.
- Advocate for the incorporation of animal welfare measures into trade agreements and talks to guarantee that trade practices do not jeopardize animal rights or welfare standards.

Ultimately, the judiciary's function in keeping animal rights is a dynamic and evolving one, pushed with the aid of a commitment to justice and compassion for all sentient beings. As the felony landscape maintains to conform, the judiciary's function in safeguarding.