



सत्यमेव जयते

FORMER UNION MINISTER OF
HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
FORMER UNION MINISTER OF SHIPPING

Shatrughan Sinha

MEMBER:

- Standing Committee on Tourism, Transport & Culture
- Consulative Committee on Information & Broadcasting

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
(LOK SABHA)

2nd July, 2018

Ms. Jayshree Mehta,
President,
Medical Council of India,
Pocket 14, Sector 8,
Dwarka,
New Delhi – 110 077

Dear Dr. Mehta,

I hope you are well. As the former Health Minister, I know the importance of giving India's future medical professionals the most modern training available. That is why, I urge you to replace animal dissection and experimentation with non-animal training methods in all post graduate medical courses.

Animal dissection is a vestige of a crueler, less enlightened time before modern technology and teaching methods existed. The conditions in which animals used for dissection and experiments are kept reflect this. They are confined to cages. Many are sick and deprived of proper food and veterinary care. Many are subjected to invasive and painful procedures as part of physiology and pharmacology courses, and others are killed just so their tissues and organs can be used in the classroom.

Today, we have a better way. Computer-assisted learning (CAL), clinical exercises, and human-patient simulation techniques are among the methods that can replace animal use in Indian post graduate medical curricula. Not only do these methods spare animals horrific suffering, they also are superior teaching tools, as multiple studies have shown. Today's computer savvy generation takes easily to this method of instruction. Several studies have found that students and instructors alike prefer non-animal teaching methods.

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Ultimately, CAL programmes save money, too, because unlike programmes that use animals they can be used repeatedly, allowing students to duplicate each step until they are proficient and confident in the material. Many can even be downloaded online for free. They also save valuable instruction time that would otherwise be spent setting up for and cleaning up after dissection.

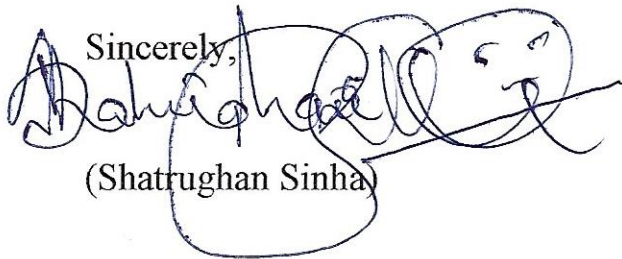
It is no wonder that these methods are widely used by top medical training institutions worldwide. Every medical school in the United States and Canada including those at Harvard, Yale and Duke Universities now uses an animal free curriculum (including for pharmacology and physiology laboratory practicals as part of the MD Degree).

And as you know, The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, requires that non animal training methods be used when available. Moreover, in 2012, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change issued guidelines to the Medical Council of India, the Pharmacy Council of India, and the University Grants Commission to *stop dissection and experimentation on animals entirely* in the training of under graduate and post graduate students and to use only non animal teaching methods.

You would be doing right by India's medical students as well as by animals if you ended the archaic practice of dissecting and experimenting on animals in post graduate medical courses.

Thank you for your time. You can reach me via PETA India's Sachin Bangera at SachinB@petaindia.org.

Sincerely,


(Shatrughan Sinha)

