

Shri Sharadchandra Govind Pawar  
National President of Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) and  
Member of Rajya Sabha  
6 Janpath Road  
New Delhi 110001

4 April 2024

**Subject: Complaint about the use of and cruelty to animals for political purposes at a news conference in Pune**

Dear Shri Pawar ji:

I'm writing to you on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India and our more than 2 million members and supporters to call to your attention that on 2 April during a news conference in Pune, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) MLA Shri Rohit Pawar used a live crab for political purposes.

In a viral video (<https://rb.gy/r8cn8o>), Shri Pawar can be seen holding a tied crab suspended in the air to make a point. The crab can be seen struggling and trying to escape. This is a violation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960; Article 51 (A)(g) of the Constitution of India; the Maharashtra Model Code of Conduct; an order issued by the office of the chief electoral officer dated 24 March 2014 prohibiting the use of animals for election campaigning (**Annexure 1**); the Election Commission of India Manual on Model Code of Conduct; and a letter issued by the Election Commission of India on 19 September 2012 (**Annexure 2**).

We urge that you immediately take suitable action to ensure that all the members of your party respect the law and rules and do not abuse animals. We would also like to request that you direct Shri Pawar to give the custody of the crab to PETA India for veterinary care and rehabilitation in nature.

It's evident from the video that Shri Pawar's use of the crab was preplanned. For a media stunt, unnecessary pain and suffering were caused to the animal. Research shows that crabs are intelligent individuals who can experience pain and suffer. They explore their surroundings, have good memories, and communicate with each other.

The letter dated 19 September 2012, issued by the office of the Election Commission of India to all political parties, states that "the cadres/workers of political parties and candidates, in their enthusiasm, should not lose sight of the legal provisions dealing with cruelty to animals". The act of displaying this crab during a political meeting violates Section 11(1)(a) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, which states that subjecting any animal to unnecessary

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pain and suffering is a punishable offence, and Article 51(A)(g) of the Constitution of India, which casts a duty on every citizen to have compassion of all living creatures.

We request your immediate action to ensure that party workers do not use animals. May we please know how we can collect the crab to move the animal to safety? I can be reached at 7303787382 or at [ShauryaA@petaindia.org](mailto:ShauryaA@petaindia.org).

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaurya', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shaurya Agrawal  
Advocacy Associate  
PETA India