

Animal rights activists stress on need to set up more ABC centres

- [Nileena M.S.](#)



Animal rights activists cite lack of adequate Animal Birth Control centres for the failure in addressing the issue of stray dog menace.

Even while welcoming the Coimbatore Corporation's move to build an animal shelter in Vellore, animal rights activists' cautioned against relocating dogs from their localities and stressed the need to set up more Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres.

Corporation Commissioner T. K. Ponnusamy said that the project would be finalised by April 2012. Diseased and aggressive dogs would be removed from the streets and kept in the shelter to be built on a 5,000 sq. ft. area on the Corporation's land in Vellore.

According to Corporation officials, diseased dogs, dogs in heat and females with young puppies turned aggressive and caused problem to the public would be caught and kept in the shelter to be set up at a cost of Rs. 25 lakh. Details like the number of dogs to be housed, provisions for food and facilities to take care of them were yet to be decided. The officials said that similar projects in Masanagudi and Tirupur were successful. Mini Vasudevan, managing trustee, Humane Animal Society, and Kalpana Vasudevan (Managing Trustee), People for Animals Unit II and member of AWBI, said that the best way to deal with stray dog menace was to strengthen the ABC programme. All stray dogs could not be captured and put in the shelter. Both the organisations said that they were willing to provide assistance to the Corporation in sheltering sick and problematic animals.

Mr. Ponnusamy said that the Corporation would look into the possibilities of working with NGOs in running the programme.

Proposal for a similar project in Chennai has been met with protests from Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and Blue Cross. According to the organisations, relocating dogs from their natural habitat was against the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001, under Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The animal right activists pointed out that prescribed methods should be followed while capturing and sheltering dogs. Dogs were territorial animals and removing them from their localities created problem. According to the activists, more ABC centres were required to effectively reduce the stray dog population in the district. The Corporation had only one centre functioning in Seeranaickenpalayam. At least, each zone of the Corporation should have a centre. Panchayats also should have facilities to sterilise dogs.

"AWBI is always ready to provide funds for the local bodies to carry out ABC programme. But, local authorities did not take much interest in this," said Ms. Kalpana. There was a misconception among people that removing stray dogs from the area would solve the problem. But, that would not help address the issue, said Ms. Mini Vasudevan. She added that unethical practices like illegal breeding by pet shop owners should be curbed.

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- **Coimbatore Corporation's move to build an animal shelter in Vellore welcomed**
 - **Diseased and aggressive dogs will be removed from the streets and kept in the shelter**