



Animal poisoning forces Corporation to take remedial action

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The Hindu

Following the poisoning of over 10 stray dogs at Peelamedu in the city on Sunday and public complaints of dogs chasing them, the Coimbatore Corporation is looking at stepping up animal birth control measure. Photo: M. Periasamy.

Civic body plans another animal birth control operation centre

The poisoning of over 10 dogs and two cats at Peelamedu on Saturday night seems to have forced the Coimbatore Corporation to act. The Corporation has preferred a complaint with the Peelamedu Police and they have registered a case in this connection, says Corporation Commissioner T.K. Ponnusamy.

On Sunday morning it came to light that 12 dogs and two cats were found lying dead at Jaganathapuram, Duraisamy Naidu Layout, Agilandeswari Nagar, Sringer Nagar and neighbouring areas. A few of those dogs were found in the drain.

Ward 39 Councillor P.K. Rajendran, who got the information from the residents, said that he immediately alerted the sanitary inspector and other officials, who deputed men to remove the carcasses and bury them.

The animals were buried at a burial ground at Peelamedu.

Sources in the Corporation said that those behind the incidents had mixed Furadan, an odourless poison, with food and placed them on banana leaves in the area.

The poison was easily available in fertilizer shops as farmers used them to protect their crops.

Animals that consumed food laced with the poison suffered from intestinal problems, immobility and subsequently had their intestine, liver and other vital organs seriously damaged.

The places where the incidents have happened had a high concentration of dogs, which troubled the residents from morning to evening – from their morning walks to return home from offices, the Councillor says.

This is not the only area that is populated with dogs and whose residents are troubled, say Councillors. Not wanting to be named, they point out that the Corporation's efforts to capture stray dogs for performing animal birth control (ABC) operations have not been successful.

And the situation has worsened in the last 10 months or so.

Earlier, those involved in catching stray dogs would visit wards on a periodical basis, inform the Councillors and take their signatures. Nothing of that sort has happened in the recent past, says a Councillor.

The Corporation has contracted the work to two non-government organisations for performing the operation at its facility in Seeranaickenpalayam and the two organisations have been engaged in the task since 2006.

Sources in the Corporation say that both of them are supposed to perform 22 operations each a day and are paid Rs. 445 a dog.

But they do not operate that many dogs a day because the money given for catching stray dogs – Rs. 25 a dog – is insufficient. Dog catchers demand between Rs. 50 and Rs. 100 a dog.

Madhu Ganesh, a representative of Humane Animal Society, has a different story to narrate.

He says that the organisations conduct 200 to 300 operations a month and have conducted 10,000 operations since they were awarded the contract in 2006.

He says more centres and funding are required to prevent dogs from breeding.

Mr. Ponnusamy says that the Corporation has planned to build a new ABC centre at Ukkadam with a capacity to perform more operations a day.

The subject will be brought before the Council during the September meeting and once the elected body approves of the proposal, the civic body will ensure that the centre turns a reality at the earliest.

Kalpana Vasudevan of People for Animals (Unit II) says that if the Corporation approves of the proposal they are ready to establish a dog shelter as well.

The Corporation has also announced in the budget that it plans to establish a dog shelter in Vellalore dump yard to house dogs.

But the project is yet to materialise. Mr. Ponnusamy says that the civic body is ready to take up the project but the people there have raised objections.