

Shri Narendra Modi ji,
Honourable Prime Minister of India
Prime Minister's Office,
South Block, New Delhi- 110011

23 December 2025

Via post and email: pkmishra.pmo@gov.in, connect@mygov.nic.in

Subject: Roadmap for the Humane & Effective Management of the Community Dog Population

Respected Prime Minister of India,

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals India (PETA India) and our over 2 million members and supporters to share the enclosed ***Roadmap for Humane Management of Community Dogs in India*** ('Roadmap') in response to the current national discourse on stray dogs and in line with the fundamental principles of *Ahimsa* and *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

The Roadmap is a humane and pragmatic blueprint for managing the dog population in the nation, prepared by veterinary, animal welfare and legal experts. Vitaly, the Roadmap takes into account the many factors contributing to community dog numbers and makes specific recommendations on how to address them in addition to, but beyond the implementation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023. Its recommendations are critical steps toward ending the expense, chaos and cruelty that arises from knee-jerk, ineffective and inhumane efforts to reduce community dog numbers.

In its order dated 7 November 2025, the Honourable Supreme Court directed that all stray dogs found in institutional premises such as educational institutions, hospitals, railway stations, and bus stops be removed and permanently relocated to designated shelters, with a bar on releasing them back to the same locations. However, the jailing of dogs would only act to exacerbate the problems the order seeks to solve.

Because it is both impractical and unsightly to barriade every public place, dogs who are picked up will simply be replaced by other community dogs in a never-ending cycle. What's more, resources that should be focused on the implementation of the ABC Rules, 2023, and rabies vaccinations will be diverted to the building of a few shelters that will only be able to house a tiny fraction of the approximately 62 million free-roaming dogs there are in India. Dogs on the roads will become fearful of getting abducted, worsening the human-animal conflict, and feeders—who help create friendly dogs—will be harassed, as is already happening more often. Animal abusers are also becoming increasingly emboldened, causing dogs to react in defense. This unprecedented wave of cruelty to animals is causing widespread distress and disillusionment among compassionate citizens who uphold the principles of kindness and respect for all living beings.

Furthermore, dogs will suffer when imprisoned and the shelters will become unique public health risks. PETA India advises shelters should function only as temporary recovery facilities for ABC programmes and hospital care. Long-term confinement of

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dogs in shelters significantly increases the risk of infectious disease outbreaks, including kennel cough, canine distemper, and parvovirus. Animal shelters can also harbour zoonotic pathogens such as ringworm, Salmonella, Leptospira, MRSA, and various parasites. Long-term confinement of large numbers of dogs will also lead to severe noise pollution and noxious odours, affecting the dogs, workers, and surrounding communities. Large volumes of faeces, urine, and food waste risk soil and water contamination and will attract rodents and insects. And ammonia from urine and organic decomposition produces foul odours and respiratory irritants.

Among other measures, the enclosed Roadmap seeks to promote a fair and helpful perception of Indian community dogs through awareness campaigns and incentives for adoption of dogs from the streets and shelters, over the purchase of 'breed' dogs. The Roadmap, among other measures, calls for a national policy to prohibit the breeding, selling, and keeping of foreign dog breeds such as pit bull terriers, Rottweilers, Pakistani bully kuttas, Dogos Argentinos (Argentine mastiffs), Presa Canarios, Fila Brasileiros (Brazilian mastiffs), bull terriers, Cane Corsos (Italian mastiffs), and XL bullies, who have been deliberately bred for aggression or illegal activities such as dogfighting. It further seeks urgent closure of unlicensed or illegal pet shops and breeders, which encourage impulse buying of breed dogs, who are often abandoned and add to the population of dogs on the streets, including by breeding with community dogs. It also encourages a prohibition on the commercial breeding and sale of dogs by local governments, which should be focused solely on implementing the ABC Rules, 2023, and facilitating adoption of dogs already in shelters or on the streets.

The Roadmap also provides recommendations for streamlining and expediting the implementation of the ABC Rules, 2023, including by encouraging smaller-scale animal birth control efforts, especially in remote areas where full-fledged ABC Centres may not be either feasible or required. It further calls for closure of illegal slaughterhouses which attract street dogs and increases human-dog conflict.

On behalf of citizens who care for dogs and all animals, and on behalf of the animals themselves, PETA India urges that directions be issued to all relevant government bodies to:

- Review the enclosed 'Roadmap for Humane Management of Community Dogs in India' in light of current challenges and the principles of *Ahimsa* and *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.
- Incorporate its recommendations into national and state-level policies, including census planning, implementation strategies, and humane population management measures.
- Ensure that efforts focus on sustainable, science-based solutions such as enforcement of the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023, and promotion of adoption rather than ineffective and inhumane approaches like mass confinement.

As Prime Minister, you have successfully led the nation through unprecedented crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, we face another immense challenge—one that deeply affects millions of compassionate citizens and millions of animals. The nation urgently needs a strengthening and implementation of humane policies for dogs that India committed to decades ago through the passage of the Prevention of Cruelty

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to Animals Act, 1960, and Animal Birth Control Rules. Your leadership will ensure that principles India holds dear remain the cornerstone of our approach to coexistence with animals and compassion.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We would be happy to assist your office, the central and state/UT governments in any reasonable manner. I can be reached at vchandravanshi@petaindia.org or 7428395762.

Yours sincerely,



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cc:

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Roadmap for Humane Management of Community Dogs in India

23 December 2025

PETA INDIA

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Overview

To effectively address the population of dogs on the streets in India, it is essential to better understand the factors contributing to their numbers and to include them in any population control plan.

In 2023, *The State of Pet Homelessness Report* by Mars Petcare India revealed that there are 62 million free-roaming dogs.¹ In 2024, the updated study reported over 60 million dogs and cats in India are living on the streets, while 8.8 million are in shelters. Those who currently end up in shelters are often animals who become lost as puppies or kittens or are unable to be returned to the streets for some other reason, such as having a severe disability, or were abandoned by their owners. These animals are usually eligible for adoption, but adoption rates from shelters are extremely low, which creates an enormous resource burden on NGOs attempting to rehabilitate these animals as well as on municipalities that also end up housing dogs. Many such animals endure poor housing in severely crowded conditions at already overwhelmed shelters.

Meanwhile, Mars Petcare India reveals that India has the highest rate of abandonment of companion animals compared to countries such as China, Germany, and the US.² Abandonment is directly linked to pet stores and breeders that sell animals as a business to anyone willing to buy them, contributing to the impulse-buying of living beings. As owners discover that the animals have complex needs, many abandon them. Abandoned dogs end up at shelters or add to the number of dogs already on the streets.

Because of the enormous welfare and homeless animal problems caused by pet stores, the keeping and selling of dogs and cats in pet shops was banned in 14 European Union member states as of 2024.³ Numerous US states also prohibit the sales of certain species from pet stores, and close to 300 US cities and counties have passed retail pet sales ban legislation.⁴ Yet in India, pet stores and breeders are rife, with the majority of them being unregistered with their State Animal Welfare Boards and therefore illegal, according to recent data gathered via the Right to Information Act, 2005. Many of these places also double up as hubs for the illegal wildlife trade, illegally selling birds or other wildlife. These animals, too, are commonly neglected and abandoned.

In recent years, pit bulls, Rottweilers, and other foreign dogs bred for aggression have become increasingly common in the country. These dogs are the most abused breeds, as they are typically used for illegal dogfights, for guarding, and attack. Pit bull-type breeds are also the most abandoned dog breeds in India, contributing to the population of dogs who end up at shelters and on the streets.⁵ At the same time, greyhounds, a foreign dog breed, are used for illegal racing, especially in Punjab. Slow and aging dogs are abandoned. Abandoned “breed” dogs end up mating with community dogs, creating stray crossbreeds.

¹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10888705.2024.2374078#abstract>

² <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-has-80-million-homeless-dogs-cats-has-highest-levels-of-abandonment-mars-petcare-report/articleshow/87916334.cms?from=mdr>

³ https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/caf8cd1d-967a-4e60-a0e5-19401be1c6b3_en

⁴ <https://www.aspc.org/improving-laws-animals/public-policy/ending-retail-puppy-sales-standing-against-puppy-mill-cruelty#:~:text=Close%20to%20300%20U.S.%20cities,additional%20jurisdictions%20across%20the%20U.S>

⁵ <https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/delhi/story/delhi-news-pitbull-dog-breeds-pitbull-attack-pitbulls-abandoned-1976103-2022-07-15>



Meanwhile, dog bite statistics generally do not differentiate between “pet” dogs, community dogs, and breeds specifically bred for aggression like pit bulls, so bites from other species can also mistakenly be included in the statistics. In Ernakulam, “pet” dogs were responsible for 75.6% of cases in the first six months of 2015.⁶ Without clear data, most animal bites are unfairly blamed on community dogs.

Jailing dogs is not a solution for controlling their population. The Animal Welfare Board of India’s (AWBI) “Revised Animal Birth Control Module for Street Dog Population Management, Rabies Eradication, Reducing Man-Dog Conflict” explains why. It reads:

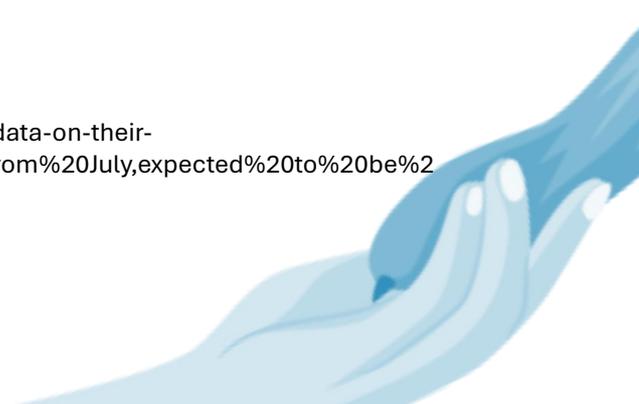
Here is what happens when street dogs are taken away or removed from an area:

1. Their territories become vacant and street dogs from neighboring areas move in to occupy them.
2. The street dogs which escape the catching squad continue to multiply, and therefore the territorial vacuum is soon filled again.
3. Dog fights increase since every time a new street dog enters a territory; he is attacked by the dogs already in the neighborhood.
4. Dog fights continue to take place over mating.
5. Dog bites also increase as during dog fights passersby may get accidentally bitten.
6. Rabies may continue to spread, if unvaccinated.
7. Street dogs are removed, and their place is taken by unvaccinated dogs.
8. When street dogs are being removed en mass, it is usually the friendlier and sterilized dogs are caught / killed / dislocated first. The street dogs that are left may be unsterilized and unfriendly. This unintended trait selection may lead to an overall change in behavior of the street dog population in that area.

Thus, this only creates an unstable, constantly changing, rapidly multiplying and rabies carrying dog population. Man-dog conflict ultimately and invariably increases in areas from which street dogs are dislocated / removed / killed.

This Roadmap for Humane Management of Community Dogs in India, therefore, seeks to propose a sensible and compassionate way forward to curb the community and homeless dog population in India. Guided by the principles of *Ahimsa* and *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, these recommendations are critical steps toward ending the expense, chaos and cruelty that arises from knee-jerk, ineffective and inhumane efforts to reduce community dog numbers.

⁶ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kochi/stray-dogs-have-data-on-their-side/articleshow/48047003.cms#:~:text=This%20story%20is%20from%20July,expected%20to%20be%20no%20different.>



Discouraging the Breeding and Sale of Dogs

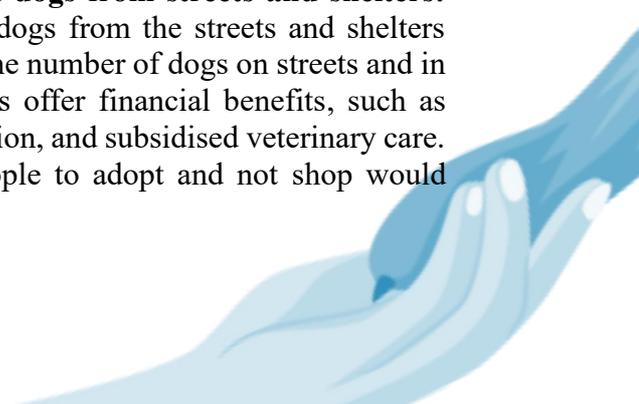
1. **Closing Illegal pet shops and breeders:** Commercial breeders and pet shops are a major contributor to uncontrolled dog population growth and abandonment as well as other forms of animal abuse. They sell dogs and other animals to anyone willing to buy them – including for illegal dogfighting, racing, and guarding (for which dogs are commonly kept on a chain or in a cage) – encourage impulse-buying, and provide little to no care guidance. Breeders and pet stores also often keep dogs (and other animals) in substandard conditions, causing health and behavioural problems that contribute to their abandonment after purchase. Many pet stores also serve as hubs for the illegal wildlife trade, selling protected species of birds, reptiles, and other animals, making enforcement critical not only for companion animal welfare but also for wildlife protection.

Breeders and pet shops that are not duly registered or operating in accordance with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960; the PCA (Dog Breeding and Marketing) Rules, 2017; the PCA (Pet Shop) Rules, 2018; and the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, should be shut down immediately. An inquiry is also necessary to investigate how breeders and pet stores “dispose” of animals who are not sold or who can no longer be used for breeding by reason of their age or infirmity. Enforcement against illegal breeders and pet shops is lacking nationwide, necessitating directions to be issued by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and implemented through the State Animal Welfare Boards.

2. **Ending commercial breeding and sale by the government:** In states such as Tamil Nadu, commercial breeding and sale of dogs is carried out by the government. Governments must be prohibited from profiteering from the breeding and sale of “breed” dogs and be directed to focus exclusively on implementing the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 (ABC Rules, 2023) and encouraging and facilitating the adoption of dogs already in animal shelters. Pet dogs, including dogs from such places, are often permitted to roam on the streets and mate with community dogs when unsterilised.
3. **Prohibiting the breeding, keeping, and sale of pit bulls, Rottweilers, and similar dogs:** National and state policies are required to prohibit the breeding, selling, and keeping of foreign dog breeds such as pit bull terriers, Rottweilers, Pakistani bully kuttas, Dogos Argentinos (Argentine mastiffs), Presa Canarios, Fila Brasileiros (Brazilian mastiffs), bull terriers, Cane Corsos (Italian mastiffs), and XL bullies, who have been deliberately bred for aggression or illegal activities such as dogfighting. Breeders and pet stores often sell these dogs to unsuspecting buyers who are themselves attacked or are unable to control the animals. Pit bull-type breeds are the most commonly abandoned dog breed in India, and this poses unique challenges for NGOs, municipalities, and the dogs themselves. They mate with community dogs or humans when left on streets, are dangerous to adopt out to families, often fall into the hands of animal abusers, and cannot be trusted around other dogs, whom they often attack. When kept in shelters, this relegates these dogs to excruciatingly cruel and lonely lives.

Encouraging the Adoption of Community Dogs and Responsible Guardianship

4. **Offering government incentives for the adoption of dogs from streets and shelters:** Government incentives to encourage the adoption of dogs from the streets and shelters instead of the purchase of “breed” dogs would reduce the number of dogs on streets and in shelters. This goal could be achieved if municipalities offer financial benefits, such as waived registration fees for these animals, free vaccination, and subsidised veterinary care. Education and awareness campaigns encouraging people to adopt and not shop would



promote a fair and positive perception of community dogs, normalise adoption, and promote responsible care.

Across India, several civic bodies have already set encouraging examples. The Shimla Municipal Corporation launched a programme encouraging the adoption of community dogs. The dogs offered were sterilised and vaccinated. The adoptions were incentivised with perks like garbage collection fee waivers. Within a year, 155 dogs had been adopted. The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has hosted “Indie Puppy Adoption Melas”, through which over 3,000 desi puppies have found homes in the last five years. According to the guidelines issued by the Department of Urban Development of Delhi in September 2025, citizens who adopt Indian dogs are exempt from registration fees and receive free sterilisation and first vaccinations at any Animal Birth Control (ABC) centre. The Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation in Karnataka found homes for 48 puppies within just 15 days of launching its adoption drive, implemented with 16 NGOs that helped raise awareness, while the corporation provided free veterinary care and check-ups.

- 5. Defining responsible “pet” guardianship as including registration, sterilisation, and lifelong care:** Municipal requirements for the registration of companion animals can be used as an opportunity to help enforce new responsible guardianship practices such as mandatory sterilisation (for companion dogs eligible to be sterilised in terms of age and physical fitness), vaccination, and deworming. Mandatory sterilisation is especially necessary, as “pet” dogs often mate with community dogs or contribute to a growing number of “breed” dogs who lack good homes. The registration could also be used to educate guardians and raise awareness of the lifetime responsibility that keeping a companion animal entails, behavioural and other basic needs of dogs, the importance of sterilisation and immunisation, and the consequences for abandoning animals under Section 11 of the PCA Act, 1960. Abandoned companion animals add to the infrastructural burden on local governments and NGOs, as the animals cannot survive well on the streets and need lifetime rehabilitation through adoption or at sanctuaries.
- 6. Rehabilitating abandoned companion dogs or dogs who cannot be released back onto the streets:** An SOP must be created for suitable sanctuary, cage-free settings by the AWBI in consultation with animal protection NGOs for any long-term housing of dogs who cannot be released onto the streets by NGOs and municipalities. This would include dogs such as companion dogs who are abandoned, those who would not survive due to a disability, and those who were lost and their point of origin is unclear. The settings must allow for freedom of movement, socialisation, enrichment, and play instead of confinement. Kennels must be regarded as appropriate only for temporary surgery recovery or hospitalisation.

Implementing a Structured Animal Birth Control (ABC) Plan.

- 7. Conducting comprehensive and periodic census of community dogs:** A district-wide census is essential for establishing sterilisation and vaccination targets, determining the animal birth control (ABC) infrastructure needed, and formulating time-bound plans to achieve these targets. The census should clearly set out the percentage of dogs already sterilised. A periodic census helps track the effectiveness of the ABC programme.
- 8. Ensuring time-bound area-wide implementation of the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023:** The State Animal Birth Control Implementation and Monitoring Committee (SMC) and the Local ABC Monitoring Committee (LMC) must establish timely and urgent strategies and deadlines for achieving sterilisation targets. The SMCs, with inputs from

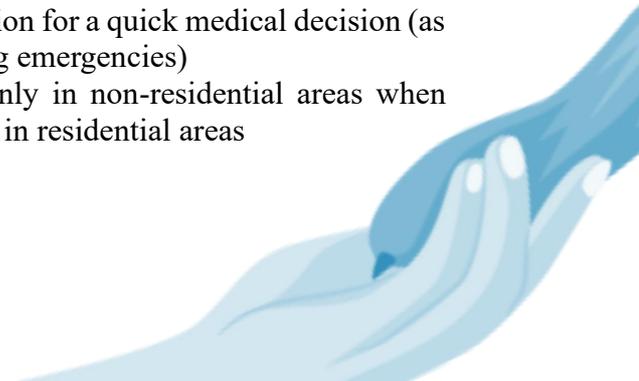


LMCs, must submit a “comprehensive district wise plan (including but not limited to infrastructure, budget, etc. for dog population management in urban and rural areas throughout the state)”, as advised by the AWBI’s “Revised Animal Birth Control Module for Street Dog Population Management, Rabies Eradication, Reducing Man-Dog Conflict”. This plan should factor in guidance from this Module, such as “The ABC Implementing Agency must work systematically to sterilize at least 70% of the dog population in a time bound and area based manner”. Furthermore, “considering that the area needs to be completely covered within 2 years, i.e. all dogs need to be sterilized”, SMCs and LMCs may decide to target hospitals, schools, colleges, and other key areas first for a sterilisation drive.

9. **Expediting approvals of NGOs/Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) for sterilisation:** The AWBI should process all pending Project Recognition Certificates within four weeks for municipalities and NGOs with sterilisation capacity.
10. **Encouraging smaller-scale animal birth control efforts:** In addition to the existing framework for Project Recognition, ABC capacity could be supplemented through smaller-scale efforts that should be encouraged by the AWBI. These can include but are not limited to private veterinary hospitals that are willing to carry out ABC, volunteers who use networks of veterinary clinics, temporary sterilisation camps by NGOs to reach remote areas, mobile ABC units, and NGOs willing to carry out sterilisation on a small scale but at their own cost. To bridge this gap, the AWBI should create supplementary guidance to encourage small-scale efforts.
11. **Offering personnel training and capacity building:** The AWBI and the Veterinary Council of India should devise training and certification courses for veterinarians, para-vets, and animal handlers on humane capture and transport, ABC surgeries, vaccination, and other capacity building with the assistance of partner NGOs. Training should be mandatory for municipal staff recruited for ABC procedures.

Simplifying the ABC Rules, 2023

12. **To support the on-ground realities of running a dog sterilisation programme and the need to expedite and widen the ABC programme, the AWBI may consider re-examining or relaxing cumbersome requirements such as:**
 - a. Project recognition procedures that can negatively impact processing time
 - b. Requirement of the involvement of one veterinarian who has conducted at least 2,000 ABC procedures
 - c. Three-year certification renewal, instead of long-term certificates that can be revoked for fault-based periodic inspections
 - d. Organ preservation as proof of ABC instead of time- and date-stamped photos/videos
 - e. Requirement of specified kennels for post-op housing, instead of having it be objective-driven (ensuring that dogs have space to stand up, lie down, turn around, and platform space away from waste and to allow for cleaning)
 - f. Requirement of four persons with each dog-catching van when two would suffice (or one for easy dogs)
 - g. Euthanasia approval by committee instead of provision for a quick medical decision (as committee decisions would prolong suffering during emergencies)
 - h. Requirement for ABC centres to be established only in non-residential areas when many NGOs would already have clinics and offices in residential areas



Creating Friendly Dogs

- 13. Promoting community feeding of dogs:** Community feeders play a critical role in maintaining harmony with dogs and supporting animal birth control efforts. Feeders help create calm, trusting dogs, who are easier to catch for sterilisation. Feeding zones should be encouraged everywhere dogs exist, and community feeders should be protected from harassment. Dogs are territorial and need to be fed where they live. Relocating them or denying food causes stress and aggression, increasing the potential for human-animal conflict.

Closing Illegal Slaughterhouses

- 14. Curbing slaughter waste:** There are 4,671 licensed slaughterhouses and approximately 32,000 illegal ones, almost all of which pollute surrounding areas with waste that attracts dogs. Strict measures for the immediate closure of slaughterhouses operating without registration under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, as well as those that are in violation of the PCA Act, 1960, the PCA (Slaughter House) Rules, 2001 and applicable municipal laws would help to reduce dog density where the slaughterhouses currently exist.

