



Elsa Foundation



Proposal to start "Animal Cops Division"
at a State Level

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About us:

Elsa Foundation is a non-profit charitable trust that focuses on the conservation of biodiversity, prevention of cruelty to animals and animal rights issues of both domestic and wild animals. It opposes keeping wild animals in captivity.

We have travelled to several countries to study best practices and implement them in India.

The foundation supports various government bodies, in informed policy-making and decision-making on critical issues impacting biodiversity and the rights of animals.

Our work areas are research, advocacy, awareness, publication, support in policy and decision-making.

Website: www.elsafoundationcharity.org

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1 Introduction

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the ways its animals are treated” – Mahatma Gandhi.

It is an undeniable fact that thousands of animals are being subject to cruelty every single day.

Animal cruelty is a criminal offence as per multiple central and state laws. These criminal cases most probably go unnoticed and no action (or) very little action is taken due to the lack of awareness of both the public and the police regarding animal cruelty laws.

Hence we propose to create a system for any common person to help the suffering animals, empowered and supported by the state police and the laws of the land

The system of animal cops is already prevalent in Western countries in which a dedicated specialist team of police are responsible for enforcing the animal cruelty laws that prohibit animal abuse and neglect. We suggest forming a similar model of **“Animal Cops Division”** in all states.

The division can be made functional with the already existing police dog squad team, in each district.

This team is considered to be appropriate for this job since they are already familiar with dealing with dogs in their daily work. **The animal cops will handle only dog cruelty cases**, as they are familiar with the handling and welfare of dogs.

In this proposal, we present in detail the need for animal cops, examples of the kinds of cruelty cases they will be taking up, the working model, and the recommendations for executing this project.

2 The Urgent Need for Animal Cops

There are several laws enacted by the government of India to help protect animals from cruelty such as the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act of 1960 etc., but it is an unfortunate fact that neither the public nor the majority of police officials is aware of these laws and hence they are not implemented and the laws fail to serve their purpose.

Of all the animal cruelty case FIRs filed by Elsa Foundation, it was the first animal case in the history of those police stations.

No animal crime cases in national crime record data

The national crime records bureau’s annual publications about crime data in all the states completely ignore animal cruelty criminal cases, which is a clear indication of the appalling condition of animal laws implementation in India.

Brutal attacks on animals continue

Brutal attacks on animals are ignored and the animals are left on the streets with serious injuries in an appalling and painful conditions without any medical treatment also.

NGOs / animal volunteers are not authorized to investigate / handle cruelty cases

As per law NGOs / animal volunteers are not authorized to investigate (or) handle cruelty cases. Currently, with a lack of police support, NGOs / volunteers take these cases, subjecting themselves to very high risk. In the majority of the incidents when NGOS / volunteers try to interfere in the matter, the NGO members are abused and attacked by people, who are doing cruelty to animals. Despite all these critical roadblocks,

NGOs and volunteers are trying their level best to get involved in the case and to find a solution to this problem.

The link between animal cruelty and violence on humans:

In a study conducted by J. Edgar Hoover, former director & founder of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), USA, he found that

“In every case, convicts involved in violent crimes had a childhood history of cruelty to animals.”

Hence animal cruelty cases are not only problems related to animals but it's also serious issues that could impact society at large.

Connecting the missing link:

When a common person comes across an incident of animal cruelty, he/she is unaware of the action he/she needs to take. In the case of an animal welfare volunteer who is determined to get justice for the animal, he/she is forced to run from pillar to post. Since he/she gets little (or) no help from the police and it becomes a mountainous task.

Police officials also think it is not their responsibility to handle animal cruelty cases, hence a system is badly needed to enable the public to report and the police to support, animal cruelty cases all over the country.

This proposal to form an “Animal cops division” aims at creating this system. We believe that the Animal Cops division is the missing link in the chain comprising of 1. The suffering animals 2. The common person who wants to help them and 3. Enforcement of laws. Hence we believe that “Animal cops division” is a necessity in the country.

Why a special division is needed?

Since training all the police officials about handling animal cruelty cases becomes very complicated, this special division with limited officials and also with hands-on experience in handling dogs is needed.

3 Sample Animal Cruelty Cases

1. Pet dogs are being chained by their owners, all through the day without any movement.
2. Owners not providing proper veterinary care, food and water for their dogs.
3. Street dogs are pelted with stones causing severe injuries (including blindness).
4. Acid attack on dogs.
5. Street dogs attacked with various types of weapons.
6. Dog dragged on road by tying to a vehicle.

4 Recommendations and Suggestions

The team that will be formed as animal cops dealing with dog cruelty cases:

We propose that the **existing police dog squad** in all district headquarters be used for this service due to the following reasons:

Scope of work:

Only dog cruelty cases. Both street dogs and pet dogs

Purpose of using dog squad police as animal cops:

- They are familiar with handling dogs and hence they can deal with dogs effectively, without fear.
- They can easily identify welfare issues, diseases and psychological illnesses in dogs.
- They understand the importance of the well-being of animals.
- Except for Chennai, the number of sniffing and tracking calls received in a year, by dog squads in other districts, is very low. So the team can be engaged in the animal cops program without disrupting their other duties.

Training: Elsa Foundation will provide full-fledged training programs to the animal cops with PowerPoint presentations, photos and short videos. We will explain all the legal aspects of animal cruelty cases and the enforcement of laws with several examples and court orders. Booklets will be distributed. This training program will equip the animal cops with all the information they need to know, to handle animal cruelty cases, file FIRs etc. The team will also be trained to create general public awareness about animal welfare.

Operating team in all districts (except Chennai):

Dog Squad has two teams 1.) Explosives detection team 2.) Crime tracking team. In all the districts (except Chennai), the entire dog squad's services i.e. both the explosives and the tracking team can serve as Animal Cops.

Operating team in Chennai:

In Chennai, since the Explosives team is busy with scheduled appointments and VIP visits, the tracking team alone can be used to serve this purpose.

Empowering the division on various legal aspects and also filing F.I.R., charge sheet

The animal cops division needs to be headed by an inspector in each district (under the direct supervision of the Superintendent of Police / Commissioner of Police). The division needs to have the powers under the relevant animal laws in force, to register and investigate the complaints. The division needs to be empowered to file FIRs and charge sheets in dog cruelty cases. The division shall need to have powers to seize and take the animal for examination before the Magistrate (or) Veterinary Officer without the registration of FIR (this is as per central government "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act")

Animal helpline number:

An animal helpline mobile number is to be assigned to each district team. This number should have a WhatsApp facility for the callers to share photos of cruelty.

Register of dog adopters:

People who are willing to adopt a rescued dog can register their details with animal cops. The purpose of this list is explained in the following section.

Case tracking register: All the cases need to be updated in a register and tracked till closure.

Vehicle: Four-wheel vehicle should be provided to transport a dog in rescue/euthanasia cases

Dog Crates: Dog crates need to be supplied to handle rescue cases.

Support from veterinary doctors:

In medical emergency cases, rescue cases and also in euthanasia cases, support from government veterinary doctors (or) private veterinary doctors is needed. This is to treat (or) sedate an animal (or) to euthanize an animal. The department should enable such support for the division by taking care of the expenses and also facilitating the activities in coordination with the Animal Husbandry department.

Private medical treatment expenses:

In special cases, in which a private veterinary doctor (or) private veterinary facilities are used (for treatment, x-ray, surgery, ultrasound scans etc.) the expenses incurred need to be taken care of by the department.

Support from NGOs: This is needed for handling the adoption and rehabilitation of dogs.

5 Operating Model

The following are the steps that would be typically followed in handling an animal cruelty case:

A) Stationary animal cases: (Animals are stationed at one place in this category)

Examples of stationary animal cases

- A dog is chained 24 hours all 365 days, by the owner.

Steps:

1. **Call:** The public on noticing an animal cruelty case would call the animal helpline mobile. They will report the case to the animal police over the phone.
2. **Counselling:** Animal police will make a visit to the house of the dog owner / person, against whom the complaint was lodged and will assess the condition of the dog (street / pet). They will educate the owner/ person about animal laws, how to care for the animal etc. and give him/her an opportunity to rectify his/her mistake. The book on the welfare and maintenance of dogs published by the foundation should be given to the owner / person as a reference guide to rectify the problems.
3. **Follow-up:** Animal police will again visit the house after a week, for doing a follow-up
4. **Adoption:** In this scenario, if the owner is ready to give the dog for adoption and if any adopter (already registered with cops) is willing to accept the dog, then a consent letter is obtained from the owner and then the dog is given for adoption. A visit by cops to the newly adopted home is mandatory to check the welfare of the dog.
5. **Extreme cases:** In cases in which the owner is not willing to rectify the problem and also not ready to give the dog for adoption, then rescue of the dog becomes mandatory. In such cases, the police need to coordinate with an animal NGO that is willing to take the animal. Police and NGOs make a joint effort to move the animal to the NGO for maintenance and give it for adoption post the judgement is delivered. FIR, the charge sheet is filled in this scenario. An arrest is done / fine is imposed, based on the nature of the crime.

B) Dog on the move (or) in danger cases:

(On-road crimes in which the animals are on the move (or) animals are in danger and need to be rescued immediately)

Example of an animal on the move (or) in danger case:

- Dog tied to a vehicle and dragged on the road

This is a special scenario in which the animal is very far from the animal cops' office and also the animal is on the move (or) in a dangerous situation. The person committing such an offence will escape, (or) the animal could not be relieved from the danger if the police do not interfere immediately.

In this case, after step 1, the animal cops team will immediately inform the local police patrol team (i.e. local law & order police team) and the local police patrol vehicle rushes to the spot immediately to rescue the animal and arrest the accused. Once this is done the other steps are as described in the previous sub-section.

Practical problem:

Except in a few places, there are no registered dog NGOs in the state. This is a huge roadblock for giving the dogs subjected to cruelty, for adoption. In such cases instead of allowing the dog to continue to suffer permanently, euthanasia of the dog with support from a veterinary doctor is recommended. This is done as per "Section 13 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act".

Complaint calls received for Wild Animals:

If any calls are received in the animal helpline number regarding wild animals, then the caller needs to be informed to contact the District Forest Office (DFO) and the number of the DFO is to be shared with the caller.

If it is nighttime (non-operational hours of DFO) then the caller is advised to contact the local law & order police station (or) the number 100.

Complaint calls received for other species of domestic animals:

For such calls, the caller is advised to contact their local law & order police station (or) the number 100.

6 Pilot run with few districts

Initially, a pilot run of the animal cops program can be done by selecting 4 or 5. Based on the experience of this pilot batch, deployment to other districts can be done

7 Appendix

Sample dog cruelty news articles

50 stray dogs burnt alive near Chennai

TNN | Jun 15, 2016, 03.10 AM IST



Chennai: At least 50 community dogs were burned alive at Keezhamur village near Melmaruvathur, about 50km from Chennai, on June 5. The dogs were sedated with food laced with pesticides. Police said a few villagers killed the dogs which allegedly attacked herds of sheep and goat.

The incident came to light after a villager informed an animal activist, P Aswath, who uncovered the tragedy four days later.

Based on Aswath's complaint, the Melmaruvathur police registered a case and booked Murali, Muthu, Murugadoss and

Jeeva - of the village in this connection.

Police said the villagers claimed a few community dogs injured a few sheep and goats when they were grazing. Some of the injured cattle died of dog bites later.

However, Aswath told TOI there were no traces of sheep and goat maimed or injured in a dog attack. "When I approached the village panchayat president and vice-president, they denied the killings," he said. "But I have evidence to prove that more than 50 dogs were killed in the village."

Aswath said the Melmaruvathur police did not take him seriously at first.

"They seemed to support the version of the villagers. But the dogs were poisoned and doused with kerosene before being set on fire," he said. Aswath said he saw the half-burnt corpses which were highly decomposed. "I collected the bodies and burnt them fully," he said.

The News Minute

Stray dog bludgeoned to death in TN, two men arrested

The murder, which was caught on camera, shows a man clubbing the dog to death and then forcing it into a sack even as its tail was wagging.



NEWS ANIMAL CRUELTY | SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

[Priyanka Thirumurthy](#)

The police in Tamil Nadu's Madurai on Saturday arrested two men for brutally killing a stray dog in Sellur village. The murder, which was caught on camera, shows a man bludgeoning the dog to death and then shoving it into a sack even as its tail was still wagging.

The accused involved in the crime were K Mathusarayanan, a manager at a cooking gas cylinder distribution unit, and Vimalraj, a sanitation worker in the Madurai Corporation. The police told TNM that Muthusarayanan paid Vimalraj to kill the dog as it attempted to bite him multiple times whenever he walked by the road in Sellur. Vimalraj undertook the task for a fee.

An unknown person recorded the crime. The video then went viral, forcing the police to act against the two men.

Two men arrested for killing stray dog

TNN | Jan 24, 2021, 04.57 AM IST

Madurai: In one of the first cases under the PCA Act, Sellur police in the city have arrested two men for allegedly clubbing a stray dog to death. They have been identified as K Muthu Saravanan of Sathyamoorthy Street at Sellur and S Vimalraj.

Animal activists in Madurai and members of the Blue Cross from Trichy raised a hue and cry over a video circulated in Whatsapp groups on Friday. The clip showed a man beating a dog to death with a log. Three women from Sivagami Street at Sellur in Madurai city filed a police complaint.

Police registered a case under Section IPC 429 r/w 11(i) (1) Prevention of Cruelty Against Animals Act (PCA) and arrested them, based on a complaint given by Madurai North VAO Muthumozhi. Saravanan had given Rs 500 to Vimalraj to kill the dog.

K P Marikumar founder of Nandrimaravel, an organisation working with community dogs, said that this was the first case registered under the PCA Act in Madurai.

FIR against Chennai student for throwing dog from terrace



PTI | Jul 5, 2016, 04.40 PM IST

CHENNAI: Animal welfare activists have filed a police complaint against a final year MBBS student who is seen throwing a dog from the terrace of a building. The student, believed to be from Chennai, was videographed by his friend and the act soon went viral on social media.

The Chennai Police is looking for the student, reportedly identified as Gowtham Sudarshan, who is seen dropping the dog from the terrace of a

three-storeyed structure. He looks into the camera, lifts the dog by holding on to its skin and drops it after getting the animal onto the parapet wall.

It is, however, not known if the animal is dead or alive.

The shocking act was captured on camera by his friend, reportedly identified as Ashish Pal, who has also been named for abetting the crime in the complaint, police said. "When we saw the video, we were shocked. It was a barbaric act and the perpetrator and abettor must be punished by law," animal welfare activist Antony Clement Rubin, who lodged the complaint along with other activists said.

Chennai: Two who beat stray dog to death held

TNN | Jan 23, 2021, 04.12 AM IST

CHENNAI: Two factory employees were arrested on Friday for beating a stray dog to death in Gerugambakkam.

The two, along with another employee, had tortured and beaten the animal with iron rods on January 1. Animal lovers, outraged by the act of cruelty, have been demanding the arrest of the perpetrators and #justiceforkatara was trending on social media.

Katara was being fed by a resident of the area, M Sathyaraj, as well as by some of the employees of a factory near his house.

When Sathyaraj couldn't find Katara on January 2, he went searching for the dog and found it bleeding and howling in pain inside the factory. The watchman told him that some young men had beaten her because she had been barking at night.

Police filed an FIR in the matter. "After investigation, we arrested factory workers Rajesh and Ranjith who admitted that they had beaten the dog. The third person has gone to his native place," said S U Raja, sub-inspector, T14 Mangadu police station.

Kerala: Dog tied to car dragged on road, man arrested



TNN | Dec 12, 2020, 04.44 AM IST

KOCHI: In yet another incident of inhumane behaviour towards animals, a man tied a dog to the boot of a moving car using a rope and dragged the animal along the road at Chalakka near Athani on Friday morning. Chengamanad police arrested Yusuf, 62, of Konnam House at Chalakka in connection with the incident. Police suspect that the man was trying to abandon the dog somewhere far from his house.

The torture came to light after two youths intervened, before recording the brutality on camera.

Akhil K S, who noticed the brutality and interfered, said, "When we confronted him, the man behaved rudely and asked us why we should be bothered even if the dog dies.

He then freed the dog and drove away. A friend and I with the help of Daya Animal Welfare Association later tracked down the dog and took the animal to a veterinary hospital at North Paravoor. It had bruises all over his body. However, it is alright for now," said Akhil.

Police have suo moto registered cases against Yusuf under sections 428, 429 of IPC and 11 (1) (a) (d) (f) of the Prevention of Cruelties Against Animals Act.

The video of cruelty has gone viral on social media.

Humane Society International/India (HIS), in a statement, said that they would provide all support to the people who reported the incident.

Dog in Kerala Had its Mouth Sealed with a Tape, Rescued After Days of Torture



Thiruvananthapuram: A few days ago, the death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala after it consumed fruit laden with explosives shocked the world. Within a few weeks, another animal has fallen victim to the bestiality of human beings.

This time around, a dog was subjected to brutality with its mouth tightly sealed with a tape wound around it. The three-year-old dog was rescued and hospitalised by the members of People for Animal Welfare Services (PAWS).

Unable to sip water or eat food, the dog was found wandering along the streets in Ollur area of Thrissur district. The tape was tightly looped in several layers, enough to reveal the bones around the canine's nose. When the rescuers approached the dog, the canine cooperated with them showing how desperate it was to get rid of the tapes. When the rescuers managed to remove the tape, some parts of the dog's skin came off as well.

The dog has a collar tied around its neck, which means the animal is probably domesticated. Immediately after the sealing was removed, it had gulped down about two litres of water. Now, a homemaker has expressed willingness to take the dog into adoption.



Animal Cops

**A New
Initiative**