

The News

Islamabad

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Ombudsman concerned over threat of stray dogs to citizens

Islamabad

Expressing his grave concern over the rapidly growing population of stray dogs in the Federal Capital and increasing number of dog bite cases, the Wafaqi Mohtasib (Federal Ombudsman), Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, taking suo moto notice, has asked CDA and the Municipal Corporation to take urgent remedial measures in view of the public suffering, says a press release.

It may be recalled that the problem of stray dogs is increasingly becoming acute due to negligence on part of the Municipal authorities in Islamabad and is causing serious hardship to senior citizens, women and children. However, sufficient attention is not being paid to this critical area. According to reports, a large number of people including the children and the elderly are bitten by the stray dogs.

In view of the magnitude of this problem, the Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, had commissioned a professional study, which inter alia, revealed that the policy of Islamabad Wild Life Management Board has not been implemented in letter and spirit.

Besides suggesting practical measures, the study also shed light on ways and means adopted by other countries of the region for tackling the issue. In this regard, Wafaqi Mohtasib had also constituted a high level committee tasked to hold meetings with the authorities concerned for recommending measures to tackle this menace. Resultantly, a dog centre was established at Tarlai under the name of Stray Dogs Population Control Centre (SDPCC). The project, however, failed to deliver and the problem remained.

The secret of success is to do the common thing uncommonly well.

John D. Rockefeller Jr.



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Mohtasib directs CDA, to take action against stray dogs posing threat for citizen

STAFF REPORTER

Expressing grave concerns over the rapidly growing population of stray dogs in the Federal Capital and increasing number of dog bite cases, the Wafaqi Mohtasib (WM), Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, taking suo-moto notice, has directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Municipal Corporation to take urgent remedial measures in view of the public suffering.

They (stray dogs) are posing severe threat to elderly persons, women & children and urgent measures are needed to be taken in this regard, the WM observed.

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not been implemented in letter and spirit. Besides suggesting practical measures, the study also shed light on ways and means adopted by other countries of the region for tackling the issue. In this regard, Wafaqi Mohtasib had also constituted a high level committee tasked to hold meetings with the authorities concerned for recommending measures to tackle this menace. Resultantly, a dog centre was established at Tarlai under the name of Stray Dogs Population Control Centre (SDPCC). The project, however, failed to deliver and the centre keepers' administrative failure was exposed by public and the animal rights' activists.

Wafaqi Mohtasib who is completing his tenure this week has taken notice of this persistent negligence on part of the CDA and initiated steps for addressing the issue of non-availability of anti-rabies vaccine in the major public sector hospitals in Islamabad. The WM office arranged meetings between the Ministry of Health and Drug Regulatory Authority, which eased the situation and led to ensuring availability of the vaccine in these hospitals. Previously, people had to pay exorbitant prices for procuring the said vaccine due to its shortage and import restrictions.

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Rising population of stray dogs in capital draws ombudsman's attention

Directs CDA to take to remedial measures

By Kashif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: The growing population of stray dogs in the capital has been posing troubles for citizens as dog bite cases are increasing, but the authorities concerned have failed to run the Stray Dogs Population Control Centre (SDPCC) in a proper way.

This failure attracted the attention of Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, who took notice and directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) to take urgent remedial measures in view of the public suffering.

On the direction of Islamabad High Court and Wafaqi Mohtasib (Federal Ombudsman), the civic agency in 2022 had set up Stray Dogs Population Control Centre in Tarlia area to control the popu-

lation of stray dogs through the 'trap, neuter, vaccinate and release' (TNVR) method.

The centre was supposed to neuter and release at least 800 dogs per month. Initially, this centre performed well for some months, as surgeries were conducted followed by the release of the dogs.

Later on, sources said that when the contract was ended last year, the performance of the centre nosedived, as the process of TNVR was stopped; therefore, the population of stray dogs witnessed an increase in Islamabad.

Currently, there are reports that the centre is serving like an 'incarceration centre' for stray dogs, as staff of the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), after catching dogs, put them in this centre, allegedly "till death".

Whereas there is no system in place for vaccination and food for 'arrested' dogs, yet dogs are surviving based on waste food and scraps provided by hotel owners. There was also a dedicated helpline 1819 for registration of complaints against the presence of stray dogs, which

is now out of order.

When contacted, a couple of officials of the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) of MCI denied that the facility is serving as an incarceration centre, claiming that dogs, after being kept in SDPCC for some days, are relocated to far-flung areas.

"We have special arrangements with hotels, which provide us with free food for these dogs. All dogs are being properly taken care of," an official of DMA said, claiming that doctors and staff of ICT wildlife department helping DMA for better care and treatment of these dogs as well. "We regularly and daily catch stray dogs," he said.

"The problem of stray dogs is increasingly becoming acute due to negligence on the part of the municipal authorities in Islamabad and is causing serious hardship to senior citizens, women and children.

"However, sufficient attention is not being paid to this critical area. According to reports, a large number of people, including children and the elderly, are bitten by the stray dogs," read a state-

ment issued by the Ombudsman's office.

It said that in view of the magnitude of this problem, the Wafaqi Mohtasib had commissioned a professional study which revealed that the policy of Islamabad Wildlife Management 1 has not been implemented in letter and spirit.

"Besides suggesting practical measures, the study also shed light on and means adopted by other countries in the region for tackling the issue. In regard, Wafaqi Mohtasib had also constituted a high-level committee to hold meetings with the authorities concerned for recommending measures to tackle this menace," it said and added, "Resultantly, a dog centre was established at Tarlia under the name SDPCC. The project, however, failed to deliver, and the problem remained the same," it said. The press release.

Before the centre was established, CDA and the MCI used to shoot dogs to control their population, but the court ordered the authorities to stop such cruelty and directed them to set up a centre.