

DAWN

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Court questions stray dog killings in Islamabad

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: With at least 2,800 dog bite cases reported at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) this year, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has sought written suggestions from the petitioner's counsel on a framework report submitted by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) in a petition challenging the eradication of stray dogs and their alleged

mass killing.

Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro heard the case on Monday, observing that the court intended to examine the matter thoroughly and bring it to a conclusion.

"It is surprising that a petition concerning the rights of dogs is being filed in the capital city," the judge remarked.

Referring to a viral video showing dead dogs on October 9, Justice Soomro questioned the government's lawyers about the incident, noting that the animals were reportedly found in a CDA vehicle. "An

FIR will be registered against the driver, and once the case is filed, we will know who ordered all this," he said, adding that it was "astonishing that so many dogs were found dead at once."

The judge compared the situation to that in interior Sindh, observing that even without proper facilities, such incidents were not reported there. "This is the federal capital — how did this happen here?" he asked.

During the hearing, Pakistan Republic Party chief Reham Khan appeared before

the court and clarified that the petition was not aimed at registering a criminal case but at ensuring the implementation of a humane and consistent policy for managing stray dogs. "We do not receive any funds from NGOs or institutions," she stated.

The CDA's counsel maintained that the vehicle in question was a sanitation truck and claimed that many of the dogs had either died naturally or were hit by vehicles.

He further informed the court that from January to September, 2,800 dog bite cases

were reported to PIMS, while additional cases at other hospitals were also reported.

Justice Soomro, however, questioned the killing of the animals, stating, "When Rs19,000 is doled out to kill the animal, it is a crime under the Penal Code."

The petitioner's counsel, MChd, adjds to w