

Stray thoughts

EVENT A recent Adoptathon in the city invited people to provide a home to stray puppies



A NEW HOME For stray puppies at Adoptathon PHOTOS: K. ANANTHAN

Humane Animal Society (HAS) and People For Animals (PFA) Unit 1, organised Adoptathon, a free puppy adoption camp at Purandaradasar Hall recently. Animal lovers, both young and old, waited in excitement, for the technicalities to be over so that they could cuddle the puppies.

HAS took up this initiative to provide shelter to the many homeless puppies. The Managing trustee of HAS, Mini Vasudevan, said, "These animals display high immunity and are better suited for the Indian climate. Most of these dogs are cross breeds. They have a highly diversified genetic pool that makes them robust and healthy."

She also said that in India there is an obsession for pure breeds. These unlike the Indian dogs are vulnerable to skin diseases as they cannot adjust to the Indian climate. "They are more comfortable in air conditioned rooms and colder climates. They find it hard to survive in Indian tropical climate."

Viju Kurian, a vet, added that Indian dogs are intelligent but people are not drawn to them as they are considered ugly. "People always go for the pretty ones. The less pretty should also be taken care of. In fact, they should be cared for even more," said Rajesh Radhakrishnan, an animal lover. The doctors gave tips to the new parents regarding medical care and maintenance of the puppies. HAS would be providing free medical service to these new pup owners.

A main objective of the adoption camp was to counter the menace of rabies. All the puppies at the camp were vaccinated against rabies. According to Kurian, "It is through sterilising the stray dogs and not leaving them abandoned in the streets that we can control rabies."

HAS has an MoU with the Coimbatore Corporation. However, there is a fund crunch and sophisticated medicines and surgical processes are expensive. HAS engages in sterilisation process on a day-to-day basis. It works closely with PFA UNIT 1, to do this. They catch the stray dogs and sterilise them. They tend to them till their stitches heal. International guidelines set by World Health Organisation are followed while performing the sterilisation.

Coimbatore has responded well to the issue of protecting stray dogs, said Mini Vasudevan. "However it should be more. We are in dire need of volunteers for our organisation. Even at the camp we need a few volunteers to play with them and make them feel comfortable."

She said one main way to reduce stray population in the cities was to reduce the garbage. "The stray dogs gather around garbage piles for food. If we stop heaping rubbish in the cities, the stray dogs will also disappear. There is no point in blaming them when we cannot take proper care and responsibility for our environment."

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