

# I hope one day we don't have to run an animal shelter: Mini Vasudevan

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*The animal activist and founder of Humane Animal Society (HAS), an NGO which has been rescuing, rehabilitating... [Read More](#)*

Coimbatore-based animal rights activist Mini Vasudevan has made the city proud. The animal activist and founder of Humane Animal Society (HAS), an NGO which has been rescuing, rehabilitating and providing treatment to abandoned animals for over a decade, has been selected for the Nari Shakti Puraskar, 2018 for her contribution to women empowerment. Mini will

receive an award from the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, in a ceremony at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan on March 8th on the occasion of International Women's Day.

An excited Mini tells us, "I knew I was nominated for the award but I never expected to receive it until I got a call from the Ministry of Women and Child Development. It's a big moment for the organization which has been working hard for the welfare of animals. Though I am pretty nervous about all the formalities at the event, I feel happy that the award has given us recognition."

Established in 2006, by Mini Vasudevan and her husband Madhu Ganesh, Humane Animal Society has helped over 50,000 animals. The husband-wife duo had moved to Coimbatore in 2004 after working in the United States of America and was moved by the plight of stray animals here. Soon, it led to the formation of HAS.

"But, the journey was not a cakewalk," says Mini. "We needed a lot of physical, monetary and emotional support. Many a time, we felt completely alone as our work was emotionally draining. Also, we needed a huge area for the animals and a lot of volunteers to work with us. Interestingly, the Coimbatore Corporation started the animal birth control programme in 2006 and provided us space at Seeranaickempalayam. We had registered the trust in April 2006 and by November, we got the space. The land at Seeranaickempalayam was a major breakthrough for us. By then, we had people who knew how to work with animals. We then started rescuing abandoned animals, provide them shelter, rehabilitate them, provide them foster care, medical treatment and also help ship animals from one place to another. Today, we have 17 members and scores of volunteers who are actively involved in our operations."

She adds, "The Blue Cross of India, Chennai was a huge pillar of support in our journey. They were one of the oldest animal welfare organisations in the state and I spent some time learning about running an animal birth control center." The organization has been conducting special workshops on animal compassion, trainings from experts and animal adoption camps."

Has there been a change in the way people deal with animals from the time you started? "There has been a tremendous change in the attitude of people in Coimbatore. At first, no one bothered. Then we started getting people involved in the rescue operations. Soon, they started taking responsibility for the animals in their area. Today, people are not only adopting animals, but also providing them foster care." On future plans, Mini says, "Organisations and people need to put aside their differences & egos and work together for the welfare of animals. We plan to educate and empower more people to look after community animals. We have been conducting outreach programmes and awareness sessions for the same. I hope one day we don't have to run a shelter and that animals are well looked after by the public. It might be a far-fetched dream but not unrealistic."