

What you can do on International Dog Day



K Jeshi

COIMBATORE , AUGUST 26, 2021 13:20 IST

UPDATED: AUGUST 26, 2021 20:54 IST

SHARE ARTICLE



PRINT

A

A

A



Rescues being treated at the centre | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

Mini Vasudevan of Humane Animal Society talks about the renewed interest in adopting or supporting indie dogs

It's the robust *naatu naai* or the indie dog that makes heads turn while adopting a pet, says Mini Vasudevan, co-founder of Humane Animal Society (HAS), an NGO in Coimbatore that addresses the welfare of stray animals. "Earlier, 'pure' breeds like the German shepherd, Dobermann, or beagle used to be sought after. Now, people want to bring home an indie, a breed that has been cross-bred over many generations, is loyal and trust-worthy," she explains.



Vaccination drive at Humane Animal Society | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

International Dog Day

On the occasion of International Dog Day (August 26), Vasudevan says it's time to turn the spotlight on helping and caring for street animals. The Humane Animal Society that has been a part of Coimbatore city for the last 15 years, has been carrying out regular animal birth control, vaccination, and anti-rabies drives. It rescues animals that are in urgent need of treatment and rehabilitates them at the Animal Birth Control and Rescue Centre, before releasing them back to their community. The outreach programme has rescued and rehabilitated 65,000 animals so far including dogs, cats, ponies, cows, goats and donkeys. "We can proudly say that now there is a number, a facility, and a team to reach out to when anyone finds an animal in distress in the city," says Vasudevan.

The growing visibility on the social media and campaigns like 'Adopt, don't shop' encouraged adoption, especially of indie dogs. During the pandemic, the monthly adoption numbers increased from an average of 20 to 35. Vasudevan says people who went through a life-altering experience with COVID-19 opened their hearts and doors to street dogs.



Mini Vasudevan | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

"The pandemic has been an eye-opener. We got so many calls to offer help with feeding and treatment of the rescues. We spoke to many neighbours who rose to the occasion to care for pets of families affected with COVID-19. Many offered fostering support. With most eateries and hotels shut, there was no food source for the dogs to scavenge on. It's humbling that the street animals are finally getting the help they deserve," she says.

Special centre for animals

While the HAS shelter currently has over 100 rescues that are under long-term rehabilitation, an exclusive sanctuary at Vazhukkuparai, located at 25 km away from Coimbatore accommodates special pets. "At this 1.5 acre facility, we have 75 animals that cannot be put back on the street. These are special pets that are mildly handicapped, a German shepherd who has lost an ear to an infection or an indie without a limb or an eye. People are still reluctant to adopt handicapped pets and older dogs."



Rescues are treated and rehabilitated at the centre | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

Vasudevan also talks of 'virtual adoption' where one can support a pet's treatment and food expenses. "About 10% of our special pets at the sanctuary have been adopted virtually," says Mini. She adds, "The rescues are initially aggressive as they are under stress from an injury. Once they heal and recover, the real personality comes to the fore. Based on this temperament, we choose a family that suits them. Some dogs socialise, get along with cats, and there are others who are energetic, and raring to go."

All pets get free lifetime veterinary care, free annual vaccinations, and free spay/neuter surgery at appropriate age from Humane Animal Society (HAS). Contact Humane Animal Society @ 93661 27215 from 9 am to 5 pm.