

Supreme Court's Order on Stray Dogs

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

The Supreme Court recently ordered the removal of stray dogs immediately from public places and relocate them to a designated shelter, after due sterilization and vaccination in accordance with the animal birth control rules.

- **Supreme Court's Direction** - To be implemented uniformly across India with status compliance certificates **within a period of 8 weeks.**
- It specified that the stray dogs so picked up shall not be released back to the same location from which they were picked up.
- **Reason** - India's is one of the world's largest populations of cats and dogs.
- India's stray animal crisis has become a serious public health issue.
- The 2025 report by The State of Pet Homelessness Project estimates that the country has 100.09 million cats and dogs, including 85.61 million dogs and 14.48 million cats.
- The majority of this population, 71% of India's dogs and 61% of India's cats are homeless.
- The Union Health Ministry recorded 3.7 million dog bite cases in 2024 alone. According to official data, **99% of rabies deaths** in India are **caused by dog bites.**
- Rabies, if untreated, is nearly always fatal once symptoms appear, leading to either the furious or paralytic forms of the disease.
- **Legal Framework in India** - India's current legal framework for managing street animals is the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, 2023.
- The rules require local bodies including municipalities and panchayats to carry out sterilization and vaccination programs for stray dogs and cats through organizations.
- Vaccination programs are approved by the **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI).**
- The process must be humane, ensuring no cruelty during capture,

surgery, or release.

- The policy follows the **“Catch-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return” (CNVR) method** which prohibits relocating animals outside their original areas to maintain ecological balance and reduce aggression among packs.
- The rules also outline minimum standards for Animal Birth Control Centres, including adequate kennel capacity and access to veterinary hospitals managed by local authorities or animal welfare groups.

Reference

[The Indian Express | India's stray animal crisis](#)

