

3. Understanding the street dogs-human conflict

Prelims Syllabus: Governance

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Governance | Issues related to health; Government policies and interventions and issues arising from it.



Why in News?

- Rising dog-bite cases in India and associated concerns.

Highlights:

- Humans have coexisted with dogs for almost 25000 years. They were domesticated and considered loyal, friendly, and intelligent.
- However, there is a growing intolerance towards various creatures like cats, cows, birds and dogs.

Dog-human conflict and associated concerns:

- It is argued by the author that the Resident Welfare Associations instigate violence against dogs living near resident societies. For instance,
- It was reported by a resident themselves that the child that was bitten to death in Hyderabad would constantly beat and tease animals. The child's father was informed by the locals.
- **For more details on the case, read here:** UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis. Mar 8th, 2023
- Residents who feed stray dogs are also targeted.

- It should be noted that dogs become aggressive only when they perceive a threat. They want to protect themselves and their litters from attack if they are hungry, unwell, forcibly relocated, or have witnessed neglect and abuse.
- Earlier, dogs were routinely killed to reduce their population. However, it did not work then and any such efforts in today's scenario will meet a similar fate.
- Moreover, if there is a vacuum, the space will be occupied by other species like rats, cockroaches, mongooses, etc. For example,
- The London Plague (in 1665) was a consequence of the killing of 250000 dogs and cats. The incident caused the mice population to increase and nearly 70% of the human population was wiped out by the 'Black Death Pandemic'.
- Similarly, Surat city of India had a plague after removing dogs.

Challenges in controlling the dog population:

- ✓ Lack of budget
- ✓ Inadequate infrastructure
- ✓ Prevalence of corrupt and inefficient practices
- ✓ Lack of transparency
- ✓ Fascination with foreign breeds of pets
- ✓ Existence of illegal pet shops and breeders

Measures adopted by the Government:

- The Union government prohibited the import of pedigree dogs into India in 2016.
- Further, it notified Rules for regulating dog breeders in 2018.
- As per the recommendation of the Law Commission, the Pet Shop Rules were notified in 2018 to regulate the trade of pedigree dogs.
- The Delhi High Court in *Dr. Maya D. Chablani v. Radha Mittal* recognized the importance of people who look after the native breed of dogs.
- The new ABC rules (2023) have protected community dog caregivers from harassment.

Way Ahead:

- The multiplication of dogs should be checked.
- The World Health Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health recommended the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules (ABC Rules) in 2001.
- The rules can bring a sustained decline in the population of dogs, rabies infection, and aggression in dogs.

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- These rules should be efficiently implemented by the local authorities to scientifically manage the dog population.
 - The Union government has issued a new set of ABC rules that address the loopholes in the existing law.
 - Instead of the removal of dogs, citizens should demand that municipal bodies formulate and implement the ABC programme in accordance with the new ABC Rules (2023).
 - The adoption of Indian dogs should be encouraged. Notably, native dogs have better immune systems than foreign breeds and thus they should be adopted as pets.
 - Reports of dog attacks should be verified on the basis of proof.

