

News

No stay is now in effect while the Supreme Court reserves its decision on appeals contesting the collection of Delhi NCR stray canines.



Numerous prominent attorneys appeared on behalf of different parties contesting the Court's order from August 11.

On appeals against its August 11 ruling mandating the collection of all stray canines in the Delhi NCR area, the Supreme Court postponed its decision on Thursday.

The directives given to municipal officials were not stayed by a bench of Justices **Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta, and NV Anjaria**.

Today, Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta made an appearance on behalf of the Central government and contended,

"In a democracy, there are those who suffer in silence and those who speak out. We've seen films of people claiming to love animals while consuming things like chicken eggs. It's a problem that has to be fixed. Kids are dying... Even with vaccination, rabies cannot be prevented by sterilization.

According to WHO figures, 305 people die annually. The majority of kids are younger than fifteen. No one hates animals... Dogs must be kept apart; they do not need to be killed. Children cannot be sent out to play by their parents. Young females are disfigured.

He went on to say that the current regulations did not provide a solution.

"Court has to intervene...this is vocal minority view vs silent majority suffering view."

Senior Advocate **Kapil Sibal** made an appearance on behalf of Project Kindness, an NGO. He contended that the August 11 ruling should be stayed.

"This is the first time I've heard SG state that laws exist but don't have to be observed. Who is supposed to follow it is the question. I would like to know if the canines have been sterilized and if the local corporation has constructed shelter homes. The money has been embezzled. There aren't any shelters. These are suo motu orders. No warning. Dogs are now being picked up. "Once sterilized, do not abandon them," you say. This has to be thoroughly debated.

"Show us the portion of the order that you find offensive. We cannot work on this all day."

"Please refer to paragraph 11(I), which mandates that all canines be gathered, taken from the NCR, and placed in dog pounds or shelters. There are none of these. It has been instructed to produce the same in eight weeks. Where will they go once they have been sterilized? All authorities have been ordered to gather up dogs; this order must be halted. What will occur? Dogs are kept together, food is thrown, and they attack one another. They will be put down. This is not acceptable.

Senior Advocate Sidharth Luthra, speaking on behalf of a different party, emphasized that other states and High Courts were adopting similar measures as a result of the August 11 order.

Furthermore, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, a Senior Advocate,

"All directives put the cart before the horse, even with the greatest of intentions. Issues are assumed in all directions; the infrastructure that is available is insufficient to support all of the dogs. It is necessary to follow directions 1, 3, and 4. Preemptive bias was practiced by SG Mehta. There are dog bites, but look at the parliamentary responses. Delhi has zero rabies fatalities. Bites are horrible, of course, but you can't set up a horrific scenario like this."

Siddhartha Dave, a Senior Advocate, continued,

"No record could be placed by anyone from NGOs or other organizations. Take that stuff away from us."

Senior Advocates Colin Gonsalves and Aman Lekhi also showed up to voice their opposition to the ruling.

Another supporter of the order contended,

"Medical reports of a patient hospitalized to Breach Candy Hospital have been submitted; people are in pain. One stray dog exists for every 24 people. Everyone present must accept responsibility for attacks as they occur."

In summarizing the arguments, Justice Nath noted,

"Laws and regulations are framed by parliament, but they are not carried out. Human beings are suffering, but there are also animal lovers present. Be accountable: everyone who has filed an intervention must submit affidavits and supporting documentation. You all."

The Bench proceeded to defer its decision regarding the stay's interim prayers.

The Delhi municipal authorities were directed by a bench of Justices **JB Pardiwala** and R Mahadevan on August 11 to start collecting stray dogs from all regions, giving priority to places that are vulnerable, and to set up shelters that can house at least 5,000 canines in the first eight weeks.

In addition to requiring sterilization, vaccination, and deworming, the order also forbade the re-release of dogs to the streets and stipulated that shelters must have CCTV, enough staff, food, and medical facilities.

Additionally, it mandated that a helpline be established within a week for reporting dog attacks, that offending canines be apprehended within four hours of a complaint, and that monthly statistics on rabies vaccination and treatment be published. Contempt of court was to be applied to anyone who interfered with the exercise.

In a suo motu case, the Court issued the order on August 11. It noted that more than 25,000 dog bite instances were reported in Delhi in 2024, and more than 3,000 cases were reported in January 2025 alone, indicating that the threat of dog bites infringes residents' fundamental rights under Articles 19(1)(d) and 21.

It concluded that sterilization efforts had not been successful in resolving the issue during the previous 20 years and that immediate, coordinated action was required.

The Bench also noted that those sleeping on the streets, old people, children, and people with visual impairments were more at risk of being attacked by stray dogs. The Court warned against "virtue signalling" by animal lovers that overlooked the fundamental issue, even as it urged acceptance under the Animal Welfare Board's 2022 guideline.

Animal rights groups protested the directive in large numbers.

With arguments that there were overlapping Supreme Court hearings on stray dogs before various benches, potentially leading to inconsistent orders, the matter was brought up before Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai on August 14.

The case was ordered to be listed before a fresh three-judge bench after the Chief Justice promised that the matter would be looked into.

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