

Editorial

From The Editor's Desk

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From the tremendous success of the official release of the APCRI Journal and the Newsletter at the APCRICON 2025, held at Chennai on 12th and 13th July, 2025, till today, I am grateful to all the Active Advisors, Experts from various fields, Reviewers, the Executive Committee Members, Journal Committee Members, and Authors/ Contributors, as well as the ADR publication house, who stood the test of time, without whom, it would not have been possible to make it happen.

It was resolved in the Executive Committee meeting of the July 2025 Conference at Chennai that the Article Processing Charges (APC) will be waived off, and accordingly, the Call for Paper (CFP) was released likewise, and I am happy to announce that we are very fortunate to get some very good articles related to rabies, some of which won the prize in the oral as well as the poster paper competitions at the APCRI Conference 2025.

Of late, as everyone knows, the menace of rabies has increased so much that it had to knock the doors of the Supreme Court for respite. Over the last 6 months, India witnessed a lot of changes in the field of rabies, especially, dog bites. A recent twist in the ongoing processes began on 11th August, 2025, with a two-judges bench of the Supreme Court of India, based on the newspaper report of children being victims of stray dogs in Delhi, took up this cause very seriously and issued an order that all stray dogs from certain parts of New Delhi be removed from the streets and sheltered outside Delhi. This led to public unrest, and a new three-judge bench was constituted to address the issue. This bench met on 14th August, 2025, and after due deliberations issued an order on 22nd August, 2025, with some modifications of the previous order and recommended continuation of the CNVR or ABC programme with certain conditions, thereby placing emphasis on feeding of stray dogs only in designated feeding zones.

Following the verdict, there were mixed reactions. Chennai dwellers witnessed a rejection by Greater Chennai Corporation to a plea to remove dogs from the campus of the Institute of Mental Health on the 11th of November 2025 after one of its staff was bitten by a stray dog within the premises. The authorities believed it to be a violation of the orders of the Supreme Court, thereby allowing stray dogs within the premises of hospitals where hundred such aggressive dogs roamed in packs. The same trend could be seen followed in schools and other public places like the bus and the railway stations. Another disturbing

incident was the recent case where a medical student suffered a skull injury when the student was chased by a pack of dogs in the hospital premises at Chennai. Later on the 27th of October 2025, the Supreme Court, under a three-judge special bench, heard the instant writ petition on a suo moto basis and concluded that the victims too must have a say in stray dog cases. This highlighted the importance of the third group i.e., the victims, in addition to the former two parties, i.e., the state and dog lovers, respectively. Moreover, the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) was impleaded as another prospective party to dog bite cases. The Court announced that the victims will never be required to deposit any amount for the proceedings, unlike the dog lovers. Further, it took a serious stance on government employees feeding stray dogs within office premises and stated that strict regulations are in the process for future implementation. This further necessitated the need for promulgation of a countrywide policy on stray dog management, as such repeated incidents put the country into disrepute. This hearing also marked the personal appearance of Chief Secretaries of almost all states and union territories, who submitted their compliance reports as per the directives of the Bench following the rejection of the plea of the Solicitor General to allow attendance of the same in virtual mode.

Recently, a woman sought twenty lakh rupees as compensation from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) for a 12 cm wound, which reiterated the voice of the innocent victims against this painstaking issue. On the other hand, a recent incident in Bangalore sent chills down the spine, where a 33-year-old was mauled by twenty stray dogs. However, currently, the Karnataka Government has been proactive in amending the Karnataka Private Medical Establishments Act 2007, thereby ensuring timely lifesaving treatment to dog bite victims. This comes as an addendum to the previous judgement by the apex court, which requires all government and private hospitals to procure and maintain a mandatory stock of anti-rabies vaccine (ARV) and immunoglobulins at all times. It also stressed that mere violation of the above will attract medical negligence under Section 106 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023 Act.

On 7th Nov, 2025, the Supreme Court went ahead and directed the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to remove cattle and other stray animals from highways and relocate them to designated shelter homes. A recent guideline was issued by Anushaktinagar providing helpline numbers for the same. A similar move was undertaken by the Karnataka Secretariat, announcing five thousand rupees (Rs 5000/-) as compensation in cases of punctures on the skin by stray dogs or deep black bruising with punctures and lacerations by stray dogs and five lakhs rupees (Rs 5,00,000/-) in case of death of the victim by the

attack of stray dogs. However, Goa has been very much proactive in this regard, thereby preparing an inventory of all government as well as private educational institutions, hospitals, public sports complexes, bus depots and railway stations and instructing all the administrative heads to secure their premises through fencing. This activity is being carried out on a war footing basis. West Bengal is also not behind, and the state plans four more anti-rabies clinics at Barasat, North Bengal, Bankura and Murshidabad, respectively.

Last but not least, if we have a child at our home who is on crutches, being disabled from some incident in the past, we do not despise their shortcomings, but rather teach them to dream of a good future ahead. Similarly, the journal may not be indexed in NMC-accredited platforms, but that does not make it less glorious. As parents and members, we must all take on the joint responsibility in its truest sense. It requires collaboration from all ends. Just because it possesses some shortcomings, it does not diminish its spark. I have always been protecting the integrity of the journal since I took charge. So, this is not an example in the literal sense, but also metaphorically.

I thank all those who are connected with the Journal, namely Dr MK Sudarshan, who was one of the advisors for the Journal in the past, all the EC members, and particularly those EC members who have helped to bring in more articles, the Journal Committee Members, the Reviewers, the Authors, and the ADR publication house. Special mention goes to CEO Ms Shalini Tripathi and Saraswati Bhadauriya in particular, who has always been in touch with me and working with me day and night tandemly, and last but not least, the Readers and the members, whose support is undeniable.