HOW TO SET UP AN SPCA

Collectors/Commissioners all over India have now realised the vital need for animal welfare services as part of their civic duties. This helps farmers, keeps the towns clean and provides a great deal of protection to the district inhabitants as all animals/birds are essential for the survival of man.

The best way to set up these services is to start a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals which, under law, is supposed to exist in every district. This Society is semi government, headed by the Collector and SP, but manned by a yearly elected body. Under the law the Collector is supposed to provide a building and land so that the SPCA can function.

Here is a note on how SPCAs are formed and the propouse they serve.

NOTE ON HOW TO SET UP THE SPCA

The DC and the SP are the two statutary heads. The SPCA is a voluntry body, supported by the district government, who has two functions:

(a) The rescue and care of all animals in the district. To rescue sick/abandoned animals, to home and rehabilitate such animals.

(b) The enforcement of laws related to animal
cruelty. SPCA officers act as special police officers and are given the power by the SP and Collector. They can challan anyone breaking the laws on animals: overloading, illtreating, selling illegal animals, bad and open slaughter houses/butchshops, trucks bringing in animals etc.

(c) To proactively look after the local tanga wallah's houses, the village cows etc.

For this purpose it requires
(a) Membership
(b) An elected board that runs it along with a secretary who looks after day to day management.
(c) A doctor
(d) Inspectors to patrol the district. Each inspector has to read the PCA Act and all the other Acts.

In physical terms it requires
(a) Land and a building to house the dispensary, office and rescued animals. Very often trucks with overloaded animals will be caught and these animals will be confiscated so it is important to have space of several acres a minimum of 4-5 acres.
(b) An ambulance

(c) A minimum of two motorcycles for the inspectors.

According to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, it is mandatory for each district to have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This society has as its head, the local administrative head of the area but it is run as an NGO. The local administrative head HAS to give it land and a building and a grant for its inspectors.

(a) The first step is for the administration to announce the making of the SPCA and give advertisements in the papers asking for those interested to sign the forms and fill in the membership fees before a particular date - 15 days from the advertisement - at a particular designated office.
(b) The date of an election is then announced and the members have to stand for the posts of president/Vice president/Secretary/Treasurer.
(c) After that an election is held for the various posts and then the land, building is handed over-Doctors and Inspectors are employed by the SPCA and it works both to pick up and treat suffering animals and to catch offenders breaking the PCA Act.
(d) Regarding the financing, for the first few years an annual grant is given to the SPCA from the district administration in order to employ
people, medicines, petrol to run its rescue and policing work. Then the fines that are collected by the SPCA from people violating the Act can either be given to the SPCA so that it becomes self sufficient or the grant continues and increases as its work increases.

(e) Where SPCAs exist and do not work, orders be given to the Commisner to call for fresh membership via the papers and have a fresh election. Very often the SPCAs have been captured by a small coterie of retired animal husbandry people and have never worked. The membership has been sealed off and so no one is allowed to come in.

In order not to let the SPCAs fail or be misused even in spirit, It is suggested that there is no "appointment" of animal husbandry people to these SPCAs. It is found that SPCAs are usually cornered by retired animal husbandry officials and they are completely uninterested in actually helping animals. After all they have spent an entire life producing animals for meat and pushing files. Therefore, we have had defunct SPCAs in most parts of India the best way to get young blood, fresh enthusiasts private vets etc, people who genuinely want to do something for animals and need an institution is to put an ad in the papers, make members, have an election and then they should be taught the laws.