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SRI LANKA PREPARES TO CLEAR ITS ROADS OF COMMUNITY DOGS FOR INDIAN PM'S VISIT WHEN INDIA HAS AN ESTIMATED 70 MILLION COMMUNITY DOGS

India has tens of millions of street dogs, some estimate it at over 70 million - why is the govt of Sri Lanka getting rid of our community dogs ahead of Prime Minister Modi's visit when he is more than used to seeing dogs on the streets of his own country and what is more is an animal lover too ? PM Modi recently visited Anant Ambani's animal refuge, clearly demonstrating his love of animals, however our misguided government is attempting to clear our roads of community animals in an attempt to portray a semblance of what ? The so called People's President has forgotten his election promises and proved himself to be no better than his predecessors . In the words of Mahatma Gandhi " the progress of a Nation can be judged by the way it's animals are treated ". It would behave our President well, to adhere to the principles of the Mahatma, during PM Modi's visit, instead of trying to annihilate these hapless animals, most of whom have been sterilized, neutered , vaccinated and are 95 % human friendly. Rescue Animals Sri Lanka who have been feeding street animals for over 40 years both in Colombo and the suburbs are yet to have experienced an unfriendly animal , neither have we encountered an aggressive one . Timid animals a plenty yes, but in our daily feeding round of 200 + dogs, never have we faced aggression from a single animal . Doesn't the Govt of Sri Lanka have more urgent and pressing issues to handle , rather than focusing on clearing the streets of voiceless animals ahead of a foreign head of state's visit , particularly one whose country has an estimated 70 million street dogs ? As per statistics, the estimated stray dog population in Sri Lanka is approximately 2.1 million. It should be noted that a significant number of this figure includes abandoned animals, in fact RAS receives an average of 15 – 20 calls daily from around Sri Lanka requesting us to take in dogs and pups who have been dumped by their owners due to old age, the owners re locating to apartments, going overseas, or the rising COL which makes it impossible for them to feed their pets !



SPAY/NEUTERED

3500+



VACCINATED

3500+



RESCUED

3000+



FIRST AID

500+



REHOMED

1500+

On another note, playing the election trombone of appeasing the villagers and farmers by arming them with shotguns to fire at elephants, peacocks, deer and monkeys is regressive to say the least and displays the sheer ignorance of those who govern us. There are scientific methods to address all these issues. Experts in these areas have long tried to convince successive governments that shotgun methods such as Elephant Drives and relocating monkeys to a far off island where there is no vegetation for them to feed on, in the hope of them ultimately dying off is both cruel and contrary to the precepts of any religion. Dr Sumith Pilapitiya and his colleagues presented former President Ranil Wickremesinghe with a detailed plan on managing the human elephant conflict, but true to tradition this has not been implemented . Indian experts in controlling the monkey population have been spoken to and they have expressed their willingness to come down and demonstrate the latest techniques via laparoscopy to our government, but they have displayed no interest in going about this in a scientific manner, instead prefer the quick fix ! India too tried culling both monkeys and dogs but



found this did not work and was contrary to all humane principles. Instead Laproscopy is now practiced with regards to curtailing the monkey population , while systematic sterilization programmes are carried out throughout India. Feeding of Community animals is encouraged and funded by the government of India and in fact during Covid, within a matter of hours passes were issued to animal feeders to proceed with their daily feeding routine. On the contrary in Sri Lanka , I myself faced a situation where the OIC of the Thalangama police station under whose purview we operate , told me bluntly on requesting for a curfew pass that he would take a gun himself and shoot all the dogs ! India is also encouraging the forces as well as Corporates and private security companies to adopt street dogs and train them as guard and sniffer dog – a far cry from Sri Lanka , where the present government has even halted the annual budgetary allocation for the sterilizing of Community animals !



Hopes ran high prior to the elections, that the People's President would address a number of issues that have burdened the people of Sri Lanka starting with the COL – but no, their focus remains on destroying nature and wildlife. The appointment of the Prime Minister was greeted with much enthusiasm as she was perceived as a woman of intelligence and education and one who had a respect and regard for animals and nature – this perception has fallen by the wayside. The NPP's Mayoral candidate last morning claimed that the clearance of the dogs has nothing to do with the CMC but needs to be brought up with the govt – but then as she is representing the govt, should she not be able to handle this burning issue which portrays our country in a most unfavourable light ?

Get your priorities right Mr President . The COL is soaring , the Education system needs a drastic overhaul, your ministers are archaic in their way of thinking and their behaviours , the whole world is moving towards a greener environment, being one with nature, and fast realising the fact that animals and humans need to co exist . Step into the 21st century please , and protect our wildlife and other animals , without destroying it. Within a matter of months you have caused more damage than in the years your predecessors did. What's more, you are all inaccessible , deaf to the pleas of environmental and animal rights activists and seem to be living in a self satisfied and smug little bubble. Welcome to the long list of myopic, blinkered, backward , and regressive, so called Heads of State who have been the blight of this county ! You have proved yourself and your government to be retarded and misinformed when it comes to the basics that govern the continuance of our planet.



RESCUE ANIMALS SRI LANKA

TRUSTEE



ANUSHA DAVID

