

ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA

Sikri, Ballabhgarh, Haryana

Minutes of the 54th General Meeting of the Animal Welfare Board of India held on 13.08.2025 at Chanderlok Building, New Delhi

The following members of the Board attended the meeting on 13.08.2025 at 11.00 a.m. physically and virtually at Chanderlok Building, New Delhi: -

1.	Dr. Abhijit Mitra, AHC, DAHD, MoFAH&D	Chairman
2.	Shri Rajeev Gupta, IAS (Retd.)	Member (Attended virtually)
3.	Prof. R.S. Chauhan	Member
4.	Shri Sunil Mansinghka	Member
5.	Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi	Member
6.	Dr. Manilal Valliyate	Member
7.	Dr. Hitesh Jani	Member
8.	Ms. Anjali Gopalan	Member
9.	Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Director, NAR-FBR Hyderabad – Rep. of ICMR	Member (Attended virtually)
10.	Shri S.P. Gupta, IAS (Retd.)	Member
11.	Shri Dhan Pal Singh	Member
12.	Dr. S.K. Dutta, Joint Commissioner (AWD), MoFAH&D	Secretary In-charge, AWBI
13.	Smt. Prachi Jain	Assistant Secretary, AWBI

The Chairman, AWBI extended a warm welcome to all the Members present at the 54th General Meeting of the Board. The Chairman appreciated the participation of the Members and emphasized the importance of their contributions in furthering the objectives of the Board.

Thereafter, the Chairman requested the Secretary, AWBI to present the agenda items for deliberation. The Secretary, along with the Assistant Secretary, AWBI, placed the following agenda items before the Board for consideration in the meeting held on 13.08.2025.

Item No.1: Ratifications of the Minutes of the various Committee meetings

The Minutes of the meetings of the various Committees of the Board held after 53rd General Meeting of the Board held from 09.01.2025 to 31.07.2025 were placed before the Board for ratification by the Board:

i) Ratification of the Minutes of the 53rd General Meeting of the Board held on 09.01.2025

The minutes of the 53rd General Meeting of the Board held on 09.01.2025 were placed before the Board and the Board ratified the minutes of the 53rd General Meeting.

ii) Ratification of the Minutes of the Recognition Committee Meeting of the Board held on 09.01.2025, 14.05.2025 and 18.07.2025

The minutes of the 03 meetings of the Recognition Committee held on 09.01.2025, 14.05.2025 and 18.07.2025 were ratified by the Board.

Shri Girish J. Shah, Member, AWBI, expressed concern over the sharp decline in the number of AWBI-recognized Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs), which has come down from 3,587 to around 300 as on date. He emphasized that this reduction is a matter of serious concern, since these AWOs play a crucial role in carrying out animal welfare activities across the country, and urged the Board to address the issue appropriately.

In response, the Chairman of the Board informed the Members that the decline is primarily due to the incorporation of the requirement of obtaining a Unique ID from NITI Aayog as well as the process of renewal of recognition by the Board, undertaken to update the status of Gaushalas/AWOs and to verify their actual functioning and existence. These measures, though resulting in a reduction of recognized AWOs, are necessary to ensure credibility and authenticity of the organizations working for animal welfare.

iii) Ratification of the Minutes of the HAWR Committee of the Board held on 14.05.2025

The minutes of the meeting of the HAWR Committee meeting held on 14.05.2025 were ratified by the Board.

iv) Ratification of the Minutes of the Performing Animals Committee held from 13.01.2025 to 31.07.2025

The Board noted and ratified the Performing Animals Committee meetings held from 13.01.2025 to till 31.07.2025 where the Board issued 292 Pre-shoot permissions and 650 No Objection Certificates after approval of the Chairman, AWBI.

v) Ratification of the Minutes of the ABC Project Recognition Committee of the Board held on 19.02.2025, 29.04.2025 and 03.07.2025

The Board ratified the minutes of the meetings of the ABC Project Recognition Committee held on 19.02.2025, 29.04.2025 and 03.07.2025.

vi) Ratification of the Minutes of the Meeting with State Animal Husbandry Department of various States / UTs held on 27.02.2025

The Board noted and ratified the minutes of the meeting of the State Animal Husbandry Department of various States / UTs held on 27.02.2025.

Shri Girish J. Shah, Shri S. P. Gupta and Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi, Members of the Board, raised concerns regarding the status of the Members of the Board as well as the use of the State Emblem by the Board Members.

The Chairman of the Board informed the Members that necessary clarifications would be sought from the Ministry of Home Affairs on these matters, particularly with respect to the use of the State Emblem and the official status of the Board Members.

Further, Shri S. P. Gupta, Member, AWBI, requested the Chairman to issue an independent communication to the Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs, informing them about the Board Members designated as In-charge for their respective States/UTs. The Chairman, AWBI, agreed to the suggestion and directed the office to issue letters to all Chief Secretaries, with copies endorsed to the concerned Principal Secretaries.

Chairman, AWBI further stated that the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 need to be revised for furtherance of the activities in the field of Animal Welfare.

Item No.2: Consideration of the matter pertaining to surrendering of few posts of the office of AWBI and creation of 5 new posts as per the requirement of the Board

The matter pertaining to surrendering few irrelevant posts of the staff of Animal Welfare Board of India was placed before the Board for consideration.

The Secretary informed the Board that many sanctioned posts were outdated and not aligned with current administrative needs. Shri S.P. Gupta and other Members agreed that creation of posts such as Deputy Secretary and Section Officers (Legal, Admin, Accounts) was essential for efficiency. They observed that the high number of MTS and stenographer posts created decades back was no longer relevant.

The Board after due deliberation on the matter decided that the AWBI office may surrender 05 number of Posts including of 03 Multitasking Staff (MTS) and 02 number of posts of Stenographers (Senior stenographer 01 and Junior stenographer 01) out of the total 21 posts available in the office and seek creation of the 05 new posts i.e. Deputy Secretary, Section Officer (Legal), Section Officer (Admin), Section Officer (Accounts) and Assistant (IT) as approved by the Board during its 53rd AGM held on 22.11.2023.

The Board agreed for the proposal in-principle and decided that the Board may communicate with the administrative ministry for surrendering of the 05 posts and creation of 05 posts against the posts to be surrendered.

Item No.3: Consideration of the matter pertaining to revision of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023

The matter pertaining to the need of revision of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 was placed before the Board as there are many reports surfaced showing the increasing incidents of dog bites and even deaths of the children and attacks by the dogs on the human beings.

Secretary, AWBI briefed the Board that the few rules in the ABC Rules, 2023 need to be revisited to modify its provisions.

Chairman stated that the Board has to take a decision keeping in view the practicability of the ABC Rules 2023 as there is no clear mention of the responsibility vested with the Local Bodies and Animal Husbandry Department to carry out this responsibility keeping in view the animal welfare.

Ms. Anjlai Gopalan, Member AWBI raised the concern about the relocation of the dogs from their original habitats stating that where the dogs will be relocated and will it be feasible.

Dr. Manilal Valliyate, Member AWBI suggested that implementation of the ABC rules is looked after by the Local Bodies in collaboration with the Animal

Husbandry Department / NGOs as per the existing provisions of the rule. The Animal Husbandry Department need to be brought under the umbrella.

Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta stressed the urgent need for compulsory sterilization before the breeding season, and highlighted that AWBI should prepare a uniform monitoring format for municipal authorities. He explained that without consistent monitoring, sterilization programmes remain fragmented and ineffective.

Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi observed that public awareness and proper waste management are essential for controlling the stray dog population. He stated that merely sterilizing dogs will not suffice unless garbage disposal is improved and citizens are educated on responsible feeding.

Shri Girish J. Shah pointed out that the rising incidence of dog bites is a matter of public concern. He recommended that AWBI should work more closely with State Governments to ensure stricter enforcement of the rules. He also suggested that the Veterinarians and the Ambulance Services run by the State Governments need to be involved in the ABC programme.

Prof. R.S. Chauhan, Member AWBI raised the concern pertaining to the Registration of the Veterinarians under the VCI or the State Veterinary Council as there is confusion whether the Veterinarian registered at one place can practice in the other State or not. The provision of the rules under VCI registration clarifies that the Vets. Registered at one place and if practicing at another place need to transfer their registration to the concerned places / State within 90 days.

Chairman, AWBI raised the concern of providing Project Recognition for the ABC programme by the AWBI without having any legal provisions to check the NGOs doing ABC and bound the Local Bodies to get the ABC programme done through only the AWBI Project Recognized NGOs for doing the ABC. He further stated that the Board should not enter into all such issues and should leave the matter to the State Governments who are responsible for implementation of the ABC programme.

After due deliberation, the Board in-principle agreed to revisit the provisions of the ABC Rules, 2023 and the revised Rules are to be placed before the Animal Act and Rules Reviewing Committee of the Board.

Item No.4: Apprising the Board about the matter pertaining to Central Monitoring Committee for ABC formed by the Ministry

The matter pertaining to the Central Monitoring Committee for ABC formed by the Ministry was placed before the Board for apprising the Board about the formation of the Monitoring Committee. As per the Rule 9 of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, the Monitoring Committees shall be constituted for effective implementation of Animal Birth Control Programs in accordance with these rules to control the population of street animals, for eradication of rabies and for reducing man-animal conflict.

Members welcomed the Board's inclusion in the Central Monitoring Committee and noted it as an important step towards ensuring AWBI's participation in policy formulation.

Shri S. P. Gupta suggested that AWBI should not limit itself to being a passive participant but must provide field-level inputs and practical insights for effective implementation.

Item No.5: Consideration of the matter pertaining to review of the authorization of Colony Animal Care Takers (CACTs)

The matter pertaining to the nomination of the Colony Animal Care Takers (CACTs) who voluntarily undertake the feeding, basic medical care, and general oversight of street animals in their respective localities was placed before the Board.

The Chairman AWBI was of the view that the process of issuing CACT Authorization Letters need to be discontinued.

The Board after due deliberation on the matter decided to constitute a committee comprising of Shri Girish J. Shah, Ms. Anjali Gopalan and Prof. R.s. Chauhan, Members of the Board to review the matter and submit a report to the Board within one month time with the consistent view whether the issuing of CACT authorization letters have to be continued by the Board or to be discontinued keeping in view the clauses of the ABC Rules, 2023 wherein it has been mentioned that the CACTs have their role defined in the implementation of the ABC Programme.

Item No.6: Matter pertaining to the implementation of the New Schemes approved by the Ministry for providing financial assistance to the AWOs for appraisal of the Board

The matter pertaining to the implementation of the 03 New Schemes was placed before the Board.

The Secretary of the Board briefed about the three new schemes, received from the Ministry vide letter No. V-11011(18)/2/2024-Admin_6-Part (1) [E-35594] dated 21.07.2025, to be facilitated by the office of Animal Welfare Board of India from the current financial year namely: -

1. Animal Shelters seeking Grants-in-Aid for old, distress, homeless, injured and sick animals;
2. Providing financial assistance for veterinary care and rescued animals,
3. Scheme for Birth Control and Immunization of stray Dogs and stray cats.

Secretary, AWBI intimated the Board that the Department of Expenditure has intimated to run the new schemes out of the funds.

Shri Ram K. Raghuvarshi stated that while the new schemes are welcome, their success will depend on the quality of shelters and veterinary care being supported. He emphasized that AWBI should ensure transparent monitoring of beneficiaries so that funds reach the intended animals.

Shri Girish J. Shah, Member AWBI raised the concern of funding for the new schemes stating that the Ministry will not provide more funds to the Board.

Chairman AWBI suggested that the Ministry will get more funds for running the Scheme properly to run the Scheme as a Mission. The Chairman remarked that these schemes provide a good opportunity for AWBI to strengthen its role in animal welfare. He stressed that timely roll-out, transparency in disbursement, and strict accountability will be essential to maintain credibility.

After due deliberation and discussion on the matter, the Board decided the following:

1. The guidelines received from DAHD for the 03 new schemes were noted by the Board and decided to be uploaded in the website of AWBI.
2. The matter pertaining to Constitution of Expert Committee for implementation of the activities of innovation under ABC Scheme was noted by the Board and the existing Committee for Project Recognition for ABC shall look into it.

3. The internal allocation of the Budget (Scheme Wise) of Rs.1030 Lacs for the financial year 2025-26 was done for utilization of the funds under these 03 new schemes.
4. The draft applications forms placed for perusal and approval of the Board prior to uploading the same on the website of the Board for seeking applications from the organizations under these 03 new schemes were approved by the Board.

Chairman, AWBI raised the concern pertaining to holding of meeting of the Board as and when he thinks necessary, therefore, there is an urgent need to amend the Animal Welfare Board (Administration) Rules, 1962.

Chairman, AWBI also raised the concern pertaining to the Headquarters office of AWBI located at far flung could not be run from the Sikri, Ballabgarh and he intimated the Board that he had already written for making some alternative arrangement for the office space as it is very serious.

Chairman, AWBI also mentioned that Smt. Prachi Jain, Assistant Secretary, AWBI is really putting her very hard work in the office of AWBI.

Item No.7: Consideration of the matter pertaining to Allocation of the Budget for the financial year 2025-26

The Ministry has allocated BE of Rs.1030.00 lakhs for the financial year 2025-26. The matter was placed before the Board for appraisal and modifications in the allocation of budget earmarked in the light of the 03 new schemes for the financial year 2025-26:

Budget Allocation for the year 2025-26

(Rupees in Crores)

S. No.	Schemes	BE Allocation by Ministry for 2025-26	Fund Revalidated for 2025-26	Proposed Allocation for 2025-26 including new schemes
1	Grant in Aid Salary	330.00	22.11	330.00
2	Grant in Aid General (Admin & Office Expenses)	500.00	39.78	100.00
3	Grant in Aid General (Creation of Capital Assets)	200.00	17.11	200.00

4	Regular Grant and Rescue Cattle Grant	-	62.83	140.00
5	Provision of Shelter House	-	84.79	140.00
6	Provision of Ambulance Services	-	36.00	-
7	Animal Birth Control (ABC) Scheme	-	-	-
8	Natural Calamity Relief to Animals	-	-	-
9	Humane Education and Awareness	-	-	20.00
	Total	1030.00	262.62	930.00 (as per available proposal)
Proposed Demand for New Schemes (Rs. 100.00 will available for New Schemes)				
10	Animal Shelters seeking Grants-in-Aid	-	-	150.00
11	Providing financial assistance for veterinary care and rescued animals	-	-	100.00
12	Scheme for Birth Control and Immunization	-	-	500.00
	Total Budget	-	-	750.00

The budget allocation was noted by the Board.

The matter pertaining to the Chairmanship of the Grants Committee Meeting was raised by the Members as the Chairman of the Board is not the Chairman of the Grants Committee, therefore, the Grants Committee meeting was not conducted twice.

Chairman, AWBI clarified that the Chairman of the Board is not Chairman of the various committees of the Board.

Shri S. P. Gupta, Member AWBI stated that if the Chairman AWBI doesn't want to be the Chairman of the Grants Committee then the senior most member of the Board should be the chairman of the committee.

Finally, it was decided by the Board that the senior members among the Board Members should be the Chairman of the Committee constituted by the Board, on rotational basis.

The matter for holding the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board was discussed and it was decided that the meeting may held on frequently / monthly basis in virtual mode. It was also decided that the Agenda decided by the Executive Committee should only be placed before the Board in its General Meeting or Annual General Meeting.

Item No.8: Consideration of the matter pertaining to pending cases of CSS schemes (all 4 CSS schemes)

The matter pertaining to the communication received from the Ministry regarding discontinuation of four Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) implemented since 2004–05, was placed before the Board, and apprised the members about the number of cases still pending for release of grant-in-aid.

It was reported that under the Shelter House Scheme, there are 25 cases where the second instalment is pending, 02 cases where the first instalment has already been released but the inspection report is adverse, and 76 cases where proposals remain incomplete due to non-receipt of documents or inspection reports. In addition, 57 cases are pending under the Ambulance Scheme, 02 cases under the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Scheme, and 16 cases under the Natural Calamity Scheme.

Shri Girish J. Shah emphasised that a large number of Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) and Gaushalas had genuine claims under these schemes and urged that the Board must take steps to ensure fair settlement of such cases so that beneficiaries are not disadvantaged due to the discontinuation of the schemes. Other members agreed with this view and observed that while the Ministry's direction to discontinue the schemes must be followed, pending eligible cases already sanctioned or under process should not be ignored.

The Chairman observed that although the schemes have been formally discontinued, the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) bears the responsibility to ensure proper closure of accounts and transparent communication of decisions. He

assured the members that genuine pending cases would be processed and settled as per existing approvals and guidelines, while incomplete or ineligible cases would be communicated as rejected in writing to the concerned organisations.

After detailed discussion, the Board resolved that all pending cases under the four discontinued schemes, shall be placed before the Grants Committee for consideration. It was further decided that no new cases shall be entertained under these schemes, and that the schemes shall be formally closed after processing of all pending matters.

Item No.9: Consideration of the matter pertaining to discontinuation of the existing 04 CSS Schemes

The matter pertaining to the communication received from the Ministry regarding discontinuation of four Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) implemented since 2004–05, was noted and approved by the Board.

Item No.10: Consideration of the matter pertaining to the Regular Grant to the Gaushalas / AWOs for the financial year 2024-25 and 2025-26 pending with the Board due to non-conduction of the meeting of the Grants Committee

The Board was apprised about the pending applications seeking financial assistance under the Regular Grant as well as Rescued Cattle Grant, which could not be considered in the Grants Committee meetings held on 14.05.2025 and 18.07.2025, was placed before the Board for deliberation.

During the discussion, Shri S. P. Gupta observed that the survival of many Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) depends critically on the timely release of cattle grants, and the prevailing pendency is causing hardship and distress among animal shelters. Members generally expressed concern that the absence of regular meetings of the Grants Committee has contributed to delays, thereby adversely affecting the welfare of rescued animals.

The Chairman concurred with these observations and emphasised that delays in disbursing cattle grants are unacceptable, particularly when they directly impact the welfare of animals. He assured the Board that the Grants Committee would be convened at the earliest to address the pending cases and further noted that future disbursements should be synchronised with the new schemes being introduced by the Ministry.

After due deliberation, the Board resolved that the Grants Committee shall be convened at the earliest to consider and clear all pending cases under the Regular Grant and Rescued Cattle Grant Schemes.

Item No.11: Consideration of the matter pertaining to discontinuation of existing Regular and Rescued Cattle schemes of the Board

The matter pertaining to the discontinuation of the existing Regular and Rescued Cattle Schemes was noted and approved by the Board for discontinuation.

Item No.12: Consideration of the matter pertaining to Implementation of Comprehensive Measures for Prevention and Management of Dog-Human Conflicts.

The draft guidelines on dog–human conflict prepared by Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta, was placed before the Board for deliberation.

During deliberations, Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta explained that the guidelines address feeding zones, responsibilities of feeders, training of security guards, and mechanisms for coordination between municipal bodies and Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs). He observed that this framework would help in reducing friction between communities and dog feeders. Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi supported the draft and recommended that the guidelines should be supplemented with public awareness campaigns on responsible feeding practices. He further emphasised that effective waste management is essential to reduce stray dog aggression and minimise conflict situations.

The Chairman appreciated the comprehensive guidelines and noted that such guidance is timely in light of increasing incidents of dog–human conflict. However, he observed that since the matter relating to dog–human conflict is presently under consideration of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Board should await the Court's decision before issuing any formal guidelines.

Accordingly, the Board took note of the draft guidelines, but deferred the matter for consideration until the Supreme Court pronounces its order.

Item No.13: Consideration of matter pertaining to monkey-human conflict

The matter regarding monkey–human conflict was placed before the Board for consideration.

During deliberations, Dr. Manilal Valliyate highlighted that since monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) were removed from the Schedule of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, a legal and practical gap has emerged in their management, resulting in increasing difficulties for States in addressing monkey–human conflict. He emphasised that there is a pressing need for guidance to States and Union Territories within the current legal framework to ensure humane handling and prevention of cruelty to monkeys. Members supported his view and endorsed the proposal for issuing an advisory to States, noting that such guidance is urgently required in view of rising incidents of conflict.

The Chairman expressed the interest to issue an advisory to all States and Union Territories on the humane handling of monkeys. He further proposed that a formal communication be sent to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) requesting reconsideration of the legal status of monkeys under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. The Chairman requested Dr. Manilal Valliyate to draft the advisory for circulation. Additionally, he requested Ms. Anjali Gopalan and Dr. Manilal Valliyate to prepare simple “Do’s and Don’ts” on feeding practices for animals, which would be uploaded on the AWBI website to guide the general public against feeding unsuitable food items to animals.

After deliberation, the Board approved the preparation and issuance of an advisory to all States and Union Territories, the submission of a formal communication to MoEF&CC, and the development of “Do’s and Don’ts” for feeding practices to be placed on the AWBI website.

Item No.14: Consideration of the matter pertaining to Registration of Elephants in Safari Rides by the Board under Performing Animals Rules, 2001

The matter pertaining to the registration for using elephants in the events / Safari Rides as performing animals under the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001 in the state of Kerala. It was recalled that the Hon’ble High Court of Kerala, in its order dated 9th December, 2014 in W.P.(C) No. 10424 of 2014, *Idukki SPCA vs. State of Kerala and Others*, had directed that elephants used in safari rides can be permitted only after obtaining prior permission and registration from the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) under the provisions of PARR framed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. The matter of issue of registration of race horses registered with Turf Clubs, polo ponies, juloos processions, and similar was also placed before the Board for consideration.

During deliberations, Shri S. P. Gupta highlighted the statutory requirement of registration and referred to the rulings of the Hon'ble Kerala High Court mandating strict compliance. He stressed that AWBI should adopt a firmer stance against the use of unregistered elephants in performances and safari rides. Members concurred with this view, noting that despite the legal mandate, many elephant owners were reluctant to register, and therefore AWBI must adopt a proactive enforcement mechanism in coordination with the State authorities.

The Chairman observed that registration under PARR is a statutory requirement and therefore non-negotiable. He assured the members that AWBI would take steps to strictly enforce these provisions and ensure compliance in coordination with State Governments, particularly in Kerala where specific judicial directions are in force.

After deliberation, the Board decided that the rules under PARR need to be reviewed for broader applicability, except in Kerala where the directions of the Hon'ble High Court shall continue to apply mandatorily. The Board further resolved that:

- Strict enforcement of registration requirements for all elephants used in performances shall be ensured by AWBI.
- A self-contained note on the registration of race horses, polo ponies, juloos and related events shall be prepared and referred to the Performing Animals Committee (PAC) of the Board for examination.
- The recommendations and decisions of the PAC on this matter shall be placed before the Board for final consideration.

Item No.15: Consideration of the matter pertaining to SOP for Slaughter House Inspection

The draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for slaughterhouse inspections was presented before the Board, supported by a detailed PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Manilal Valliyate. The SOP proposed capacity-building training for relevant stakeholders, including members of State Animal Welfare Boards, nominated veterinarians from the Animal Husbandry Departments, SPCAs, and private veterinarians.

During deliberations, Dr. Manilal Valliyate explained that the SOP, along with a proposed checklist, would ensure uniformity and effectiveness in inspections

across States and stressed the importance of training inspectors in humane slaughter practices and hygienic standards. Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta supported the proposal and suggested incorporating clear timelines and reporting formats to strengthen monitoring and accountability. Shri Girish J. Shah recommended that State-level training workshops be organised so that officials and Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) are properly oriented on the SOP before implementation. Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi observed that existing norms and practices followed in different States should be compiled and studied to enrich the checklist and incorporate best practices.

The Chairman welcomed the initiative, emphasising that standardised and effective inspections are critical not only for ensuring animal welfare but also for safeguarding public health. He clarified that there was no need to appoint new inspectors, but rather to provide more exhaustive training to the existing inspection teams. He further noted that while the Board principally agreed with the SOP, given the seriousness of the issue, it would be prudent to review the inputs provided by Dr. Valliyate once more. He suggested that an interaction session with key stakeholders be organised prior to finalising the SOP, to incorporate practical feedback.

After detailed discussion, the Board resolved to approve the SOP in principle, and initiate capacity-building programmes for their training. It was also decided that the Secretariat would compile existing State norms on slaughterhouse inspections and organise stakeholder consultations, following which the SOP, with necessary refinements, would be rolled out for implementation.

Item No.16: Consideration of matter for finalization of the candidates participated in the event launched through MY Bharat portal during the Animal Welfare Fortnight.

The matter pertaining to the finalisation of the candidates' names as winners for the three types of activities i.e. painting/photography/article writing posted on the My Bharat Portal was placed before the Board for consideration. The Board agreed to finalise the names of the winners based on the recommendations of the Award and Event Committee Members.

The names finalised are as follows:

- Photography on Five Principles of Animal Welfare – JBF Foundation, Assam
- Poster Making on Animal Welfare and One Health – Ms. Dia Bhavsar
- Story Writing on Management of Homeless Animals with Illustrative Points and Solutions – Ms. Avileena Sanskriti Dutta

The Board approved the list of winners and directed that they be informed promptly.

Item No.17 : Consideration of Animal Welfare and Protection Award– 2025

The matter pertaining to organising the Animal Welfare and Protection Award–2025 programme, along with revamping the application format by constituting a Committee and publishing the same on the website for inviting applications, was placed before the Board. The Board agreed to the proposal.

The Chairman suggested that the old jury may be requested to have a meeting with the office as well as with the Members of the Board for consultation. The suggestion of the Secretary, AWBI to incorporate a new category for Best Veterinary Practices in the Animal Welfare and Protection Award–2025 was also agreed.

After deliberation, the Board approved the constitution of a Committee to revise the application process and jury framework, and to take necessary steps for inviting applications for the Animal Welfare and Protection Award–2025.

Item No.18: Consideration of the matter pertaining to resuming publication of the AWBI Newsletter, Animal Citizen and Jeev Sarathi after Title verification from Press Registrar General of India

The matter regarding resumption of AWBI publications—Animal Citizen, Jeev Sarathi and Jeev Sarathi (Hindi)—which had not been published since October 2020, July 2016 and January 2013 respectively, was placed before the Board.

During deliberations, Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi observed that publications in regional languages should also be considered so that animal welfare messages reach a wider audience. Members welcomed the proposal and underlined the importance of timely and informative publications as an important tool for raising awareness among the public and stakeholders.

The Chairman endorsed the proposal, emphasising that publications serve as a vital medium for educating stakeholders about animal welfare laws and good practices. He further proposed that the resumption be undertaken only after verification of the titles with the Press Registrar General of India.

After discussion, the Board agreed to resume only one publication, titled Jeev Sarthi, to be published quarterly in bilingual format, subject to title verification from the Press Registrar General of India.

Item No.19: Consideration of the matter pertaining to review of pending court cases of the Board

The brief of the ongoing court cases along with a summary of pending matters involving AWBI was placed before the Board for appraisal and to update Members on the current status.

Shri Girish J. Shah supported this view and observed that timely and well-prepared responses are critical in safeguarding the cause of animal welfare.

The Chairman concurred with the Members, stating that AWBI must adopt a more proactive approach in defending its cases, including engaging competent counsel and monitoring proceedings more closely. After discussion, the Board noted the matter and authorized the Secretary to engage legal counsel wherever necessary and to maintain a quarterly case tracker for regular review.

Additional Item: No.1: Consideration of matter pertaining to Coordination with various Ministries and institutions on issues of Animal Welfare

The point raised by Shri Rajeev Gupta, IAS (Retd.), Member AWBI regarding the need for coordination with various Ministries and institutions on animal welfare issues was placed before the Board. Shri Rajeev Gupta emphasized that many matters overlap with the Ministries of Environment and Health, and suggested that the Executive Committee of the Board should be entrusted with examining inter-ministerial coordination on such issues.

The Board agreed in principle with the suggestion.

Any Other item:

Chairman further suggested that the Board should not fix or finalize new days for animal welfare celebrations unless such observances are decided by the Government or recognized internationally.

The Chairman thanked all Members for their active participation and constructive deliberations. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.
