

ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA
Sikri, Ballabhgarh, Haryana

Final Minutes of the 55th General Meeting of the Animal Welfare Board of India
held on 06.05.2026 at Chanderlok Building, New Delhi

The following members attended the 55th General Meeting of the Board held on 06.05.2026 at Chanderlok Building, New Delhi in Hybrid Mode (physically and virtually): -

1. Dr. Muthukumarasamy B., IAS	- Chairman
2. Dr. Naveena B. Maheswarappa, Animal Husbandry Commissioner	- Member
3. Shri Mahesh Chandra – rep. MHA	- Member
4. Shri Rajeev Gupta, IAS (Retd.)	- Member – Attended virtually
5. Shri S.P. Gupta, IAS (Retd.)	- Member
6. Shri Girish J. Shah	- Member
7. Shri Sunil Mansinghka	- Member
8. Shri Ram K. Raghuvanshi	- Member
9. Ms. Anjali Gopalan	- Member
10. Prof. R.S. Chauhan	- Member
11. Shri Ajit Sharad Kelkar	- Member
12. Shri Dhan Pal Singh	- Member
13. Dr. Hitesh Jani	- Member
14. Dr. Mukesh Kr. Gupta - Rep. ICMR	- Member
15. Dr. Manilal Valliyate	- Member
16. Shri R. Raghu Ram Sharma	- Member
17. Dr. M.K. Chauhan	- Secretary, AWBI
18. Smt. Prachi Jain	- Assistant Secretary, AWBI

The Chairman welcomed all the Members present in the meeting and introduced Dr. M. K. Chauhan, Secretary, AWBI, who had recently joined the Board as Secretary. Thereafter, the Chairman requested the Secretary to place the agenda items before the Board for consideration.

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

The Minutes of various Committee Meetings held after the 55th Annual General Meeting of the Board dated 19.12.2025 and not ratified therein were placed before the Board for ratification as detailed below:

1.1. Recognition Committee Meetings

The approved minutes of the two meetings of the Recognition Committee held on 19.12.2025 and 13.02.2026 respectively were placed before the Board for ratification and the same was ratified by the Board.

1.2 Grants Committee Meeting

The approved minutes of the meeting of the Grants Committee held on 13.02.2026 were placed before the Board for ratification and the same was ratified by the Board.

1.3 Performing Animals Committee Meetings

The details of the 21 meetings of the Performing Animals Committee held during the period from 29.11.2025 to 22.04.2026 wherein 211 pre-shoot permissions and 371 NOCs were issued with the approval of the Chairman, AWBI, were placed before the Board for perusal and the same was noted by the Board.

1.4 ABC Project Recognition Committee Meetings

The approved minutes of the three meetings of ABC Project Recognition Committee held on 27.11.2025, 21.01.2026 and 01.04.2026 respectively were placed before the Board for ratification and the same was ratified by the Board.

1.5 Animal Act and Rules Reviewing & Legal Committee Meeting`

The approved minutes of the meeting of Animal Act and Rules Reviewing & Legal Committee Meeting held on 20.01.2026 were placed before the Board for ratification and the same was ratified by the Board.

Item No.2: Consideration of the matter pertaining to Allocation of the Budget for the financial year 2026-27

The Budget Estimate (BE) of Rs. 724.00 lakh allocated to the Animal Welfare Board of India for the Financial Year 2026–27 by the Ministry and the details of the amount revalidated by the Ministry for the current Financial Year, were placed before the Board indicating scheme-wise allocation, revalidated funds and proposed internal distribution:

(Rupees in Lakhs)			
S .No.	Schemes	BE Allocation by Ministry for 2026-27	Fund Revalidated for 2026-27
1	Grant in Aid Salary	285.00	38.97
2	Grant in Aid General (Admin & Office Expenses)	339.00	-
3	Grant in Aid General (Creation of Capital Assets)	100.00	-
4	Regular Grant and Rescue Cattle Grant	Scheme Closed	3.15
5	Provision of Shelter House	Scheme Closed	11.25
6	Provision of Ambulance Services	Scheme Closed	-

7	Animal Birth Control (ABC) Scheme	Scheme Closed	
8	Natural Calamity Relief to Animals	Scheme Closed	-
9	Humane Education and Awareness	-	-
10	Animal Shelters seeking Grants-in-Aid	EFC under consideration	
11	Providing financial assistance for veterinary care and rescued animals	EFC under consideration	
	Total	724.00	53.37

The details of the budget were perused and noted by the Board. During the deliberations, the Members raised queries regarding the new schemes proposed to be implemented by the AWBI. In response, the Chairman, AWBI informed that the proposed schemes are presently under active consideration of the Ministry and the details thereof would be placed before the Board after finalization by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC).

Further, the Chairman, AWBI emphasized the need to develop a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for establishing an effective monitoring mechanism to ensure proper utilization of funds released to Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs). The proposed mechanism may include utilization of modern technologies such as CCTV surveillance, geo-tagging, detailed scrutiny of estimates through veterinarians/technical personnel, and systematic inspections of AWOs before sanction of grants, during project execution, and after completion of projects, so as to ensure that the grants are utilized strictly for the sanctioned purpose.

The Chairman, AWBI further informed that detailed guidelines for the two proposed schemes, based on the observations/recommendations of the EFC, are required to be prepared by the Board. The draft guidelines may thereafter be circulated among the Board Members and a virtual meeting may also be convened for detailed deliberations and suggestions on the same.

Item No. 3: Consideration of the matter pertaining to fixation of price of AWBI quarterly bilingual magazine Jeev Sarthi

The matter pertaining to fixation of the price of the AWBI quarterly bilingual magazine was deliberated upon by the Board. It was noted that the Board, during its 54th General Meeting held on 13.08.2025, had already approved resumption of publication of the AWBI quarterly magazine "Jeev Sarthi" considering it as an effective medium for dissemination of information, awareness generation, and promotion of animal welfare laws and practices.

The Board was further apprised that the process for registration of the quarterly bilingual magazine on the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI) portal has been initiated. However, the title "Jeevsarthi" approved earlier could not be processed in

view of PRGI guidelines, as single-word titles are not permissible and similar titles are already in existence.

It was informed that, as per PRGI norms, up to ten alternative titles may be proposed for verification, out of which one title is approved subject to availability. Accordingly, the following titles, with slight modifications in some cases, were considered and approved by the Board for forwarding to PRGI:

Jeev-jantu Sakha
Jeev-jantu Bharati
Jeev-jantu Setu
Jeev-jantu Prahari
Jeev-jantu Rakshak
Jeev-jantu Prerna
Jeev-jantu Kalyan Bharti
Jeev-jantu Gyan
Jeev-jantu Daya
Jeev-jantu Premi

The matter relating to fixation of the subscription price of the AWBI bilingual magazine was also deliberated upon and the Board approved the subscription charges as under:

Rs. 50/- per volume
Rs. 200/- for annual subscription
Rs. 1000/- for five-year subscription.

Item No. 4: Consideration of the matter pertaining to revision/change of the AWBI Logo

The matter regarding revision/change of the existing Logo of the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI), which has been in use for more than eight years, was placed before the Board. The proposal was intended to prevent misuse of the Logo, provide a contemporary institutional identity, enhance public visibility, and obtain legal protection through registration under the Trade Marks Act, 1999.

The Board, after due deliberation and discussion, decided to continue with the existing Logo of the Board. The Board further approved that necessary action may be taken for registration of the existing Logo under the Trade Marks Act, 1999, following the prescribed procedure, including filing of the application, examination, publication in the Trade Marks Journal and grant of registration, as applicable, so as to secure legal protection and exclusive rights over the Logo.

Item No. 5: Consideration of the matter pertaining to amendment of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Markets) Rules, 2017

The draft proposal titled "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Markets) Amendment Rules, 2026", prepared by the Animal Acts and Rules

Reviewing & Legal Committee of the Board in its meeting held on 20.01.2026, was placed before the Board for consideration.

The Board decided that the draft Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Markets) Amendment Rules, 2026 may be circulated among the Members for their perusal and comments/inputs, if any, within three days of receipt of the draft.

After receipt and consideration of the comments/inputs of the Members, the final draft, as approved by the Board, shall be forwarded to the Ministry for taking further necessary action for finalisation and notification of the Amendment Rules in the Gazette of India, following the prescribed procedure.

A copy of the draft Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Markets) Amendment Rules, 2026 is placed at **Annexure-I**.

Item No. 6: Consideration of the matter pertaining to disposal of pending applications for ABC Project Recognition under the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023

The matter regarding disposal of pending applications for ABC Project Recognition (PRC) under the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 was placed before the Board for consideration, with a view to expediting disposal of pending applications, streamlining the processing mechanism, prescribing timelines for receipt of inspection reports and facilitating early decision-making. The Board has been receiving a large number of applications from Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs), other organizations/establishments and Local Bodies seeking ABC Project Recognition under the said Rules.

The Board deliberated upon the existing process for grant of PRC with reference to the provisions of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 and the guidelines/directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court regarding implementation of the ABC Programme by the States/UTs.

Shri Girish J. Shah, Member, AWBI, suggested that the 4,978 Local Bodies may be proactively advised to undertake ABC work for addressing the issue of street dog population and reducing incidences of rabies. He also suggested that an advisory in this regard may be issued to create awareness among the concerned stakeholders.

It was informed that a total of 339 applications for PRC have been received by the Board from various States/UTs. Out of these, 86 applications have been approved and PRC issued, 22 applications are under process, 167 applications are pending due to queries raised, 50 applications are pending for inspection and 14 applications have been closed.

The Chairman, AWBI, suggested that, in order to streamline and expedite the processing of PRC applications, deemed approval may be considered for eligible organizations/Local Bodies within 15 days of receipt of a complete application after ministerial scrutiny, subject to receipt of a favourable inspection report from the Inspection Agency within three months from the date of deemed approval. He further suggested that Government Veterinary Hospitals may also be involved in the

implementation of the ABC Programme and that the PRC process may be made easier for eligible applicants.

Dr. Manilal Valliyate, Member, AWBI, suggested that decentralisation of the PRC process may be considered to facilitate ease of processing. He further suggested that awareness programmes may be organised for the States/UTs in consultation with all concerned stakeholders.

The Chairman, AWBI, directed that all pending applications should be disposed of in a time-bound manner, either by approval or rejection. Complete applications pending for inspection may be accorded approval in principle, subject to receipt of a favourable inspection report within three months.

Accordingly, the Board decided that the 50 applications for which inspection has already been ordered and inspection reports are awaited may be accorded approval in principle, subject to receipt of favourable inspection reports within the stipulated period of three months.

In respect of the 167 applications where queries have been raised, the applicants may be given an opportunity to furnish the requisite documents/information within 21 days. Reminders may be issued at an interval of seven days, and in case of non-response within the stipulated period, the applications may be closed, with liberty to the applicants to submit a fresh application after completing the requisite documentation.

The Board further decided that appropriate communications may be issued to the concerned Urban Local Bodies/organizations for furnishing the required information/documents within 15 days, wherever necessary.

The Board also considered that suitable advisories/awareness communications may be issued to States/UTs and Local Bodies regarding implementation of the ABC Programme and compliance with the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023.

Item No. 7: Consideration of the matter pertaining to empanelment of individuals for inspection of Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs)

The matter regarding strengthening of the inspection mechanism for Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs) and Animal Birth Control (ABC) Centres through empanelment of qualified and experienced personnel was placed before the Board for consideration. The proposal was intended to facilitate timely, objective and effective inspections in view of the increasing number of AWOs, ABC Centres and complaints requiring field verification.

The Board deliberated on the matter and, considering the requirement of ensuring objectivity, accountability and professional competence in inspections, decided that private individuals shall not be empanelled for this purpose. The panel shall comprise eligible Government officials/personnel from Government institutions/Universities, Veterinary Officers of the States/UTs and other Government organisations, having relevant experience and proven integrity.

The Board further decided that preference may be given to personnel having a background in Veterinary Science and/or Law. District Veterinary Officers having 5–10 years of relevant experience may also be considered for empanelment.

The empanelled personnel may be assigned inspection duties, as and when required, along with a Member of the Board or an officer of the Animal Husbandry Department of the concerned State/UT, wherever considered appropriate. The inspection reports shall be submitted to the Board for further necessary action and, wherever required, may also be shared with the concerned State/UT authorities for confirmation/appropriate action.

The Board decided that training/capacity building of the empanelled personnel shall be mandatory before assignment of inspection duties. Suitable batches of approximately 30 personnel may be organised through both virtual and physical modes.

The Board approved the proposed criteria for empanelment of inspection personnel, placed at **Annexure-II**, and decided that the empanelment process may be undertaken accordingly.

The Chairman, AWBI, further emphasised that wherever financial assistance/grants have been released to AWOs and an adverse inspection report or report regarding misutilisation of funds is received, immediate action shall be initiated for recovery of the amount in accordance with the applicable scheme guidelines and prescribed procedure. Where the concerned AWO fails to respond or make the requisite payment within three months, the matter may be taken up with the concerned District Magistrate/competent authority for recovery, along with applicable interest, as per the relevant provisions governing recovery of Government dues.

The Chairman further emphasised that necessary action for recovery should be pursued in a time-bound manner so as to safeguard Government funds and ensure that there is no loss to the Government of India.

Item No.8: Consideration of the matter pertaining to nomination and regulatory framework of Honorary Animal Welfare Representatives (HAWRs)

The matter regarding the existing mechanism for nomination and functioning of Honorary Animal Welfare Representatives (HAWRs) was placed before the Board for consideration, particularly in view of the representations received regarding the legal basis of such nominations, instances of alleged misuse of HAWR identity cards and unauthorized representation by certain persons. The need for greater clarity in the nomination process and strengthening of verification, coordination and monitoring mechanisms was also brought to the notice of the Board.

During deliberations, the Members observed that HAWRs are intended to facilitate animal welfare activities at the grassroots level and that the requirement for such representatives may vary across different States/UTs depending upon the local requirements. The Members also emphasized that the nomination mechanism should provide for proper identification and verification of the persons concerned and should

be aligned with the legal and administrative framework applicable in the respective State/UT.

The Members further deliberated that, considering the varying requirements of the States/UTs and the legal mechanisms available with the respective authorities, greater involvement of the concerned State/UT authorities would be appropriate in the process of nomination and local-level coordination of HAWRs. It was also considered necessary that suitable safeguards and clarity regarding the status and role of HAWRs should be maintained to avoid unauthorized representation or misuse of HAWR identity cards.

After detailed deliberation, the Board decided that an appropriate advisory/guideline/mechanism may be issued by AWBI for nomination of HAWRs by the concerned State/UT authorities, as per their requirement and the available legal mechanism in the respective State/UT.

The Board further emphasized that the mechanism so issued should prescribe the eligibility and selection criteria, nomination procedure, verification and documentation requirements, tenure, training/orientation, functions and limitations, code of conduct, identity/authorization, reporting and monitoring arrangements, and safeguards against misuse or unauthorized representation, so as to ensure transparency, accountability and uniformity in the nomination and functioning of HAWRs.

Item No. 9: Consideration of the matter pertaining to registration of Race Horses, Polo Ponies, Juloos (Religious Processions), Elephant Safari Rides and related events under the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001

The matter pertaining to registration of Race Horses, Polo Ponies, Juloos/Religious, Cultural and Political Processions, Safari Rides, Joy Rides and Circus Animals under the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001 was placed before the Board for consideration. The Board was apprised of the recommendations made by the Performing Animal Committee (PAC) in its meeting held on 05.05.2026 at Chanderlok Building, New Delhi. The recommendations of the PAC were placed at **Annexure-III**. The Members deliberated upon the recommendations of the PAC in respect of different categories of performing animals and activities.

In respect of Race Horses, the Board noted the provisions of the Performing Animals (Registration) Amendment Rules, 2002, under which race horses registered by their owners with the Turf Authorities are not required to be separately registered under the said Rules, subject to intimation to the prescribed authority and compliance with the general conditions specified under Rule 8 and such other conditions as may be imposed by the prescribed authority. The Board considered the PAC's recommendation for registration of the concerned Turf Clubs/Turf Authorities under the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001, instead of individual registration of each race horse, subject to maintenance and submission of complete and updated records of race horses and compliance with applicable veterinary, welfare, anti-doping and other prescribed conditions.

The Board also considered the recommendations of the PAC in respect of Polo Ponies, Safari Rides and Joy Rides, and emphasized that such activities, wherever permissible under the applicable legal framework, shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, the Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001 and other applicable rules/guidelines, ensuring the welfare, safety and humane treatment of the animals involved.

The Board also considered the PAC's recommendations regarding Circus Animals, including constitution of a technical expert committee to examine the acts performed by animals in circuses with reference to their natural instincts and the applicable provisions of the Rules.

The Board observed that Juloos, religious and cultural processions involving animals may be conducted, wherever otherwise permissible under law, but such events should be conducted in a cruelty-free manner, keeping in view the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and the Rules made thereunder. The welfare, safety and humane treatment of animals involved in such events should be duly ensured. Necessary permission/clearance for organizing such events should be obtained from the Station House Officer (SHO)/Station Officer (SO) of the respective area, as applicable under the prevailing legal and administrative framework.

The meeting ended with thanks to the chair.
