

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT MADRAS

DATED: 24.03.2026

CORAM :

THE HONOURABLE MR. SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,
CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

THE HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE G.ARUL MURUGAN

WP No.9373 of 2026

Hope For Critters
Rep. by its Managing Trustee,
RA. Kirthana,
No.58, Avvai Nagar Main Road,
Avvai Nagar, Thiruvanmiyur,
Chennai – 600 041
Rep. by its Power of Attorney,
Hema Kalyanasundaram,
'Reflection' Tower B, B1, ECR,
Thiruvudhandai, Chennai - 603 112.

Petitioner(s)

Vs

1. The Commissioner
Greater Chennai Corporation,
Ripon Building, Chennai-600 003.
2. The Veterinary Officer
Greater Chennai Corporation,
Ripon Building, Chennai-600 003.

Respondent(s)

PRAYER: Petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking issuance of a writ of mandamus directing the respondents to

permit the petitioner to have regulated access to the respondents Animal Birth Control Centers situated at Pulianthope, Lloyds Colony, Kannampet, Meenambakkam, Sholinganallur, Manali, Madhavaram, Perungudi, Thiruvottiyur and Municipal Pounds, pursuant to the petitioner's representation dated 26.01.2026.

For Petitioner(s): Ms.S.Pavithra

For Respondent(s): Mr.A.Arun Babu
Standing Counsel
for R1 and R2

ORDER

(Order of the Court was made by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

Alleging that in the Animal Birth Control Centres [ABC Centres] managed by the respondents, the dogs are confined in cramped, unhygienic and neglected conditions, the petitioner sent a representation to the respondents on 26.1.2026. As the said representation did not evoke any response, the present writ petition is filed seeking issuance of a direction to the respondents to permit the petitioner to have regulated access to the ABC Centres situated at Pulianthope, Lloyds Colony, Kannampet, Meenambakkam, Sholinganallur, Manali, Madhavaram, Perungudi, Thiruvottiyur and Municipal Pounds.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that though initially animal welfare volunteers/NGOs were permitted access to various ABC centers and municipal pounds operated by the respondents for the purpose of feeding, post-operative monitoring, reporting illness or mortality, providing medicines and assisting veterinary staff, the respondents have imposed a ubiquitous blanket ban, albeit unwritten, on the animal welfare fraternity's access to any of the ABC Centres. It is further submitted that ABC centres can never be treated as closed establishments and, therefore, the petitioner should be given access to the ABC Centres.

3. Confuting the aforesaid submission, learned counsel for the respondents submitted that the directions issued by the Supreme Court in the Suo Moto Writ Petition (Civil) No.5 of 2025, in *In re "City Hounded by Strays, Kids Pay Price"* are strictly adhered to and purely based on some photographs, without indicating the location from where they have been pictured, the writ petition may not be entertained. It is further submitted that a representation was sent on 26.1.2026 and the present writ petition was filed on 11.2.2026,

almost within a fortnight, without giving any time to the authorities to take a decision thereon.

4. It is not in dispute that the issue pertaining to stray dogs is *in seisin* of the Supreme Court in Suo Motu Writ Petition (Civil) No.5 of 2025, wherein a series of directions have been issued time and again. Some of the directions issued by the Supreme Court in the order dated 22.8.2025 are extracted herein below for ready reference:

"33. We, therefore, feel that a holistic approach requires mollification of the directions issued vide order dated 11th August, 2025. Accordingly, the directions issued by the two-Judge bench of this Court are supplemented, modified, and clarified in the terms indicated below:

...

g. Each individual dog lover and each NGO that has approached this Court shall deposit a sum of Rs. 25,000/- and Rs. 2,00,000/-, respectively, with the Registry of this Court within a period of 7 days, failing which they shall not be allowed to appear in the matter any further. The amounts so deposited shall be

utilised in the creation of the infrastructure and facilities for the stray dogs under the aegis of the respective municipal bodies.

...

36. We are also informed that numerous writ petitions/suo motu petitions are pending in various High Courts, more or less dealing with common issues. Hence, the Registry shall seek information about such pending writ petitions from the Registrar Generals of all the High Courts, and thereafter, these writ petitions shall stand transferred to this Court for analogous consideration along with the main matter.”

5. It is, therefore, clear that all the issues pertaining to stray dogs are now governed by the directions issued by the Supreme Court from time to time.

6. The Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 notified by the Central Government, under Rule 10 obligates the local authority to ensure that (i) animal birth control centres within their jurisdiction have sufficient number of kennels and veterinary hospital facilities which

may be managed by the local authority or animal welfare organization; (ii) for periodic repair and maintenance of animal birth control centres; (iii) cleanliness and hygiene to be maintained at all times at the animal birth control centres.

7. Rule 10(4) of the Rules further empowers the local authority to inquire into the matter of violation of these rules on receipt of the complaint against the ABC Centre and the local authority shall terminate or suspend any engagement with such an organization on the basis of the recommendation of the Local Animal Birth Control Monitoring Committee or the Board.

8. Rule 11(18) of the Rules mandates that the ABC Centre shall have sufficient space for proper housing and free movement of dogs and the place should have proper ventilation and natural lighting and must be kept clean.

9. Rule 14 of the Rules empowers the Animal Welfare Board of India to authorise an inspection team in writing to inspect any ABC Centre on receipt of a complaint or for periodical inspection.

10. There are statutory provisions in place. However, the petitioner barring production of some photographs, without specifying the location, has filed this writ petition seeking an omnibus prayer to have access to various ABC Centres based on vague allegations. The petitioner has not raised any specific plea of violation of any of the aforesaid Rules.

11. Though learned counsel for the petitioner submitted that there is a blanket ban restricting animal welfare fraternity's access to the ABC Centres, there is no iota of material to justify such bald allegation.

12. The petitioner, having sent a representation on 26.1.2026, ought to have waited for a reasonable time to enable the authorities to take necessary steps in accordance with the Rules.

13. On the basis of such allegations sans substance, a writ petition cannot be entertained. The writ petition is, therefore, dismissed. There shall be no order as to costs.

We make it clear that this order shall not preclude the respondents from considering the representation of the petitioner dated 26.1.2026 in accordance with the statutory framework and the directions issued by the Supreme Court governing the issue.

(SUSHRUT ARVIND DHARMADHIKARI,CJ) (G.ARUL MURUGAN,J)
24.03.2026

Index : Yes
Neutral Citation : Yes
sasi

To:

1. The Commissioner
Greater Chennai Corporation,
Ripon Building, Chennai-600 003.
2. The Veterinary Officer
Greater Chennai Corporation,
Ripon Building, Chennai-600 003.

W.P.No.9373 of 2026

THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE
AND
G.ARUL MURUGAN,J.

(sasi)

WP No.9373 of 2026

24.03.2026