The Government of Jammu and Kashmir needs to act and act fast. The urgency has to be felt and attended to. The most pressing health problem at this moment is the menace of dog bite and deaths due to rabies.

**The Problem**

There are an estimated one hundred thousand dogs in Srinagar city only. These dogs are known for their fast multiplication. There is no place left where one can walk without being hounded by these animals. They are even seen loitering inside the SMHS and other hospitals in Srinagar. There is documented evidence of more than twenty five thousand dog bites in the last five years with ten deaths due to rabies (1). This is just from one documenting department. So the figure may be at least two to three times more. My own experience tells me that the mortality is much higher than reported. Even worse is the fact that rabies vaccine and immunoglobulins are not freely available in the government hospitals.

**The Future**

It is estimated that the population of Srinagar will be overcome by the dog population in the next five years. That only means more dog bites-more severe and serious ones. There would be more cases of rabies and more precious human lives lost to a preventable menace. It would be really difficult to control them at that time. *Every single day an average of two hundred dogs are born in Srinagar city alone and in another two years one thousand dogs per day would be added.* This is becoming scary!

**The Solution**

The Government should address the problem as a health issue and not as an animal right issue. Nothing is more precious than human life. The situation may be unique and would require a bold and unique solution. The priority has to be set right (2). There is nothing wrong in culling the dogs. Just last year crores of rupees were spent in the management strategies against swine flu. There was not even a single case of death here in Srinagar due to swine flu and the disease fizzled. The hype was beyond imagination (3). Most of it was hypothetical and related to pharmaceutical business. But here is a real issue at hand and the government seems to be failing or at least seems clueless. We are asking for the dogs to be culled, not for fun, but to save humans from their bites and death.

It would indeed be sad if a Geelani would be needed to give a *call to eradicate the dogs* on a Friday afternoon, if the Government does not act now.

Comments and suggestions from the readers are welcome.

**References:**


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