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Minister for Animal Husbandry
& Sericulture and
Chamarajanagar District
In-Charge Minister



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World Rabies Day Observation – Inaugural Speech

Good morning to all the dignitaries on the dais: the Secretary of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, Government of Karnataka the Commissioner and Director of the Department of Animal Husbandry, Government of Karnataka, esteemed members of the Veterinary College, KVAFSU, Bengaluru, representatives of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru; BeST Cluster; KIMS, Madikeri; KIMS, Bengaluru; Indian Immunologicals Limited, Hyderabad; CVA; and Mission Rabies, as well as all the audience.

It is meaningful that the nine organizations have jointly organized this awareness program on the occasion of "**World Rabies Day**". I am extremely happy to have the opportunity to attend the inauguration of this important program and share a few thoughts with you.

As you all know, rabies is a very terrifying and fatal disease. Once the symptoms of rabies appear and the disease is confirmed, death occurs because an effective treatment is not available. Therefore, it is very important to protect ourselves from this disease.

Rabies is mainly transmitted to humans through the bites or contact of infected animals, especially dogs. Every day, we see reports in the media about dog bite cases. We also frequently hear people talking about dog bite incidents in our villages. Since children are particularly vulnerable to such incidents, it is very important to create awareness among them and the general public.

On this occasion, we must remember the **great scientist Louis Pasteur**, who made a significant contribution to protecting humankind from this fatal disease by developing the rabies vaccine. As a result of his research, the rabies vaccine was developed, helping to save millions of lives.

However, it is regrettable that despite the availability of vaccines and preventive measures, many people still lose their lives to rabies. Seeing the suffering of a person afflicted with rabies is truly heartbreaking. Even though we have the necessary tools for disease control, the disease has not yet been completely controlled due to a lack of adequate public awareness.

Since the majority of rabies cases in humans are transmitted through dogs, early diagnosis, surveillance, vaccination, and effective control of rabies in dogs are critical to preventing the spread of the disease to humans. In this regard, the role of the KVAFSU–CVA Rabies Diagnostic Laboratory (RDL) and the Department of Animal Husbandry is particularly crucial.

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The KVAFSU-CVA Rabies Diagnostic Laboratory, located at the Veterinary College campus, KVAFSU, Hebbal, Bengaluru, plays a vital role in rabies diagnosis, training, extension, and research at the national and international levels for both Veterinary and Medical doctors. Following its recognition by the OIE [now World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)] in 2013 as a collaborating laboratory, it was officially designated as a WOAH Reference Laboratory for Rabies on 16th June 2020, becoming the 12th WOAH Reference Laboratory for Rabies globally and the first in South Asia and South East Asia. The laboratory provides quality-assured diagnostic services using techniques including the Direct Fluorescent Antibody (DFA) test, Direct Rapid Immunohistochemical Test (DRIT), and Lateral Flow Assay (LFA), and also as a part of capacity building the laboratory conducts several national, regional, and international training programmes to strengthen rabies diagnostic capabilities.

The Department of Animal Husbandry, Government of Karnataka. also conducts public awareness programmes every year during September and October to educate the public on rabies prevention, responsible pet ownership, timely vaccination of dogs, and appropriate measures following animal bites. During 2024-25, awareness programmes were organized in 5,241 schools and colleges, and 6,62,183 pet dogs were vaccinated free of cost against rabies. During 2025-26, awareness programmes were organized in 9,175 schools and colleges, and 9,51, 593 pet dogs were vaccinated free of cost. During 2026-27 so far, awareness programmes have been organized in 7,200 schools and colleges, creating awareness about rabies among approximately 5 lakh students and 32,000 teachers. These coordinated efforts in diagnosis, capacity building, dog vaccination, and public awareness are contributing significantly to strengthening rabies prevention and control and reducing the risk of dog-mediated rabies transmission to humans.

The WVS Mission Rabies and Care organizations have provided 1 lakh doses of vaccines free of cost. Under the ASCAD project, the department will provide 10 lakh doses of rabies vaccines. Consequently, in the year 2026-27 year, our department is fully engaged in providing free rabies vaccines to 11 lakh pet dogs to prevent the transmission of the disease from dogs to humans.

To achieve success in controlling any disease, it is crucial that all stakeholders, related departments, and organizations work together. Seeing various organizations come together in today's program to strive for public awareness about rabies gives me the confidence that in the coming days, we can work even more effectively towards making our state rabies-free.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who came to this program, stayed with us, and gave me the opportunity to share my thoughts.


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