



# ANIMAL LAW CELL

## FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



### MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE PET SHOP SURVEY BY ANIMAL LAW CELL

The Animal Law Cell conducted a survey on the condition of pet shops across Delhi, based on 34 visits. The findings were compiled into a report, which has been submitted to the concerned authorities. A press release was also circulated to various media houses on 12th May. The Pet Shop Compliance Project by the Animal Law Cell has received an overwhelming response and has been widely covered by various media outlets.

Links and snapshots of the published articles are attached below.

#### Goldfish in glass bottles, selling exotic tortoises: Report on pet shops highlights irregularities

SOPHIYA MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, MAY 14

PUPPIES SOLD before they were weaned, goldfish stuffed into glass bottles, illicit sale of exotic star tortoises, sick animals caged with healthy ones without clean water...



...and informal breeder networks, the report added. The violations ranged from unweaned puppies - some as being orphaned...

#### Goldfish in perfume bottle, protected species on sale—DU students' report on horrors of Delhi pet shops

DU law students found star turtles for sale, animals kept in filth, and puppies sold in unlicensed shops.

#### Underage Pups and Cramped Cages: The Dark Side of Delhi's Pet Shops

#### Widespread cruelty, illegal practices in Delhi pet shops: Survey

"We encountered deplorable housing conditions... lack of necessities such as feed and water being provided to animals blatantly violate rules. The Pet Shop Rules have been enacted to ensure the well-being of animals kept and traded in pet shops, but most establishments continue to flout them with impunity," the team wrote on Monday in a letter to Delhi Commissioner (Animal Development) Anil Kumar Singh and Dr Satyavir Singh, director of the Delhi Animal Welfare Board's animal husbandry unit.

#### Dead fish, cramped cages: report finds illegal pet trade in city despite existing rules

Soibam Rocky Singh  
NEW DELHI

A new report has uncovered rampant cruelty and widespread legal violations across pet shops in the Capital. Conducted by the Animal Law Cell at the University of Delhi's Faculty of Law, the report titled 'Violations of Pet Shop Rules, 2018 across Delhi' found that not a single one of the 34 surveyed shops complied with the rules.

NEW DELHI: A DU report has revealed widespread violations of the Pet Shop Rules, 2018, across 34 pet shops in Delhi, citing underage puppy sales, unlicensed operations, and unhygienic conditions. The Animal Law Cell called for urgent enforcement, including closures, seizures, and stricter monitoring, warning that continued inaction undermines animal welfare.





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# THE HINDU

# *The Indian* EXPRESS



The DU report is based on a survey of 34 pet shops done across Delhi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Dead fish, cramped cages: report finds illegal pet trade in city despite existing rules

**Soibam Rocky Singh**

NEW DELHI | 14th May 2025

A new report has uncovered rampant cruelty and widespread legal violations across pet shops in the Capital. Conducted by the Animal Law Cell at the University of Delhi's Faculty of Law, the report titled 'Violations of Pet Shop Rules, 2018 across Delhi' found that not a single one of the 34 surveyed shops complied with the rules.

From the sale of underage puppies to dead fish rotting in crowded aquariums, the report paints a grim picture of a thriving yet unregulated pet trade in Delhi, both offline and increasingly online.

A probe team, comprising law students, documented shocking cases of neglect and cruelty, exposing a complete breakdown of oversight by authorities like the Delhi Animal Welfare Board.

The report also calls for urgent crack-downs, shop closures, and awareness campaigns to combat this cruelty, and warns that without strict enforcement, Delhi's animals will continue to suffer in pet shops.

"This report is a wake-up call – the law exists to protect animals, but without enforcement, it remains meaningless. Authorities must act now," said Prof. Sunanda Bharti, Convener of the Animal Law Cell.

## Goldfish in glass bottles, selling exotic tortoises: Report on pet shops highlights irregularities

Date of Print: 15th May 2025

**SOPHIYA MATHEW**

NEW DELHI, MAY 14

PUPPIES SOLD before they were weaned, goldfish stuffed into glass bottles, illicit sale of exotic star tortoises, sick animals caged with healthy ones without clean water or veterinary access, and missing licenses – a survey conducted by the Animal Law Cell (ALC) under the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, has highlighted recurring patterns of violations in pet shops across Delhi.

Between April 6 and 9, 18 students of the ALC undertook field visits to 34 pet shops across eight zones of Delhi – Shahdara, Central Delhi, Rohini, Janakpuri, Uttam Nagar, Malviya Nagar, Khan Market, and Burari. The survey, supervised by faculty members and the Dean of the Faculty of Law, was designed to evaluate compliance with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Pet Shop) Rules, 2018.

"We encountered deplorable housing conditions... lack of basic necessities such as feed and water being provided to animals that blatantly violate rules. The Pet Shop Rules have been enacted to ensure the well-being of animals kept and traded in pet shops, yet most establishments continue to flout them with impunity," the team wrote on Monday in a letter to Delhi Commissioner (Development) Anil Kumar Singh, and Dr Satyavir Singh, director of the Delhi Animal Welfare Board's animal husbandry unit.

The ALC called for "conducting inspections, issuing closure notices, sealing unregistered pet shops and seizing the animals housed and displayed for sale within these establishments". It also sought comprehensive in-



Animals kept in horrific conditions; (above) goldfish in a small bottle.

spection of pet shops at least once a year, continuous monitoring to prevent illegal sale of wildlife, and maintenance of records at shops.

As per the report, none of the 34 shops had a valid or visibly displayed certificate of registration. Many shops also had no permanent structures. The survey also found issues with waste disposal.

"Most of the shops... fail to provide sufficient dietary requirements; lack access to clean drinking water and proper feeding vessels; do not remove food waste, animal excreta, and organic waste on a daily basis; and house animals inimical to each other in the same enclosures," it said.

Many shops claimed to only sell pet accessories, but were in fact supplying animals illegally through personal messaging apps

and informal breeder networks, the report added.

The violations ranged from unweaned puppies – some as young as 40 days – being openly offered for sale, to exotic birds and reptiles caged in unclean, overcrowded enclosures, with no provision for veterinary care, it stated. In Northwest Delhi, a vendor was found selling a pair of goldfish in a 750 ml glass bottle.

According to the report, in several instances, rabbits were kept in metal cages exposed to the harsh sun, birds were seen in wire enclosures without shade, and mice were kept in stacked cages without food or water. In other shops, dead fish floated in algae-choked tanks while iguanas, parakeets and turtles were displayed alongside household pets in breach of wildlife protection laws.

The report several recurring violations – no shop had veterinary emergency contact information displayed or maintained health records for animals.

Staffing standards were equally poor, the report indicated, with several shops operated solely by owners or minors without any trained personnel. A lack of ventilation, shade, or temperature control in many shops exposed animals to extreme heat.

The report stated, "Although a legal framework exists to regulate pet shops... there remains significant implementation gaps on the ground..." It added: "In many cases, pet shops were unaware of... applicable legal requirements, further highlighting the need for robust awareness, outreach, and enforcement mechanisms..."

The report also found a "large" and "rapidly expanding" online pet trade that is unregulated and held through social media pages and websites.



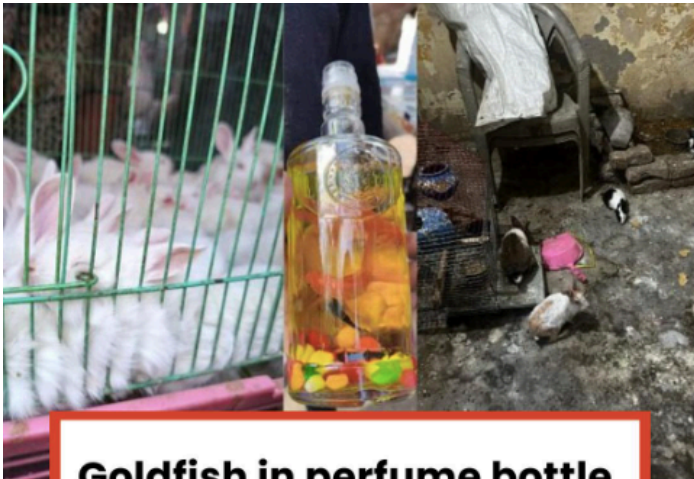


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### ThePrint



**Goldfish in perfume bottle, protected species on sale —DU students' report on horrors of Delhi pet shops**

Most were found in violation of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Pet Shop) Rules, 2018, by selling animals that were too young—particularly puppies aged 40 to 45 days that had not even been weaned from their mothers.

“We researched very carefully before going out to visit the shops, and realised that the law is actually very thorough,” said Ankur Arora, a second-year law student and student convener of the ALC. “But visiting the shops made us realise how without implementation, this thoroughness is useless.”

The ALC is a student-run society at Delhi University, comprising students from across the Faculty of Law. Their survey has been submitted to both the Animal Husbandry Unit of the Delhi

“We at some level wanted people to be aware of the law, and realise that while they may buy pets for their happiness, the process by which the pets come to them is filled with cruelty,” said Arora. “If they are still buying animals like this, they are adding to the cruelty.”

(Edited by Radifah Kabir)

### HT Hindustan Times

## Widespread cruelty, illegal practices in Delhi pet shops: Survey

“This report is a wake-up call — the law exists to protect animals but without enforcement, it remains meaningless. Authorities must act now,” Bharti said.

The report calls for urgent measures, including the immediate shutdown of non-compliant pet shops, the seizure of animals kept in violation of the rules and stricter monitoring to curb the illegal sale of wildlife and companion animals.

“Without intervention, these violations will continue to harm countless animals, undermining the legal protections that are meant to safeguard their welfare,” Ankur Arora, student convener of the Animal Law Cell, adding that the failure to enforce existing laws sends a dangerous message that cruelty is tolerable.

OPEN APP

The Animal Law Cell expressed the hope that the detailed findings will aid the



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**THE HINDU**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/dead-fish-cramped-cages-report-finds-illegal-pet-trade-in-city-despite-existing-rules/article69572923.ece/amp/>

**HT Hindustan Times**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/pet/widespread-cruelty-illegal-practices-in-delhi-pet-shops-survey-101747150962262-amp.html>

**The Indian EXPRESS**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/sale-of-unweaned-puppies-pet-shops-delhi-illegal-10004513/lite/>



<https://theprint.in/india/goldfish-in-perfume-bottle-protected-species-on-sale-du-students-report-on-horrors-of-delhi-pet-shops/2624197/>

**millenniumpost**  
NO HALF TRUTHS

<https://www.millenniumpost.in/amp/delhi/news-at-a-glance-610589>

**THEWEEK**

<https://www.theweek.in/wire-updates/national/2025/05/13/des59-dl-pet-shop-survey.amp.html>



<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/law-order/3380493-underage-pups-and-cramped-cages-the-dark-side-of-delhis-pet-shops?amp>