

Maharashtra to launch emergency medical toll-free number for farm animals

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Maharashtra is to launch an emergency medical services (EMS) for animals, introducing a toll-free number - 1962 - for the same. (Virendr Gosain/HT PHOTO)

Maharashtra is to launch an emergency medical services (EMS) for animals, introducing a toll-free number - 1962 - for the same.

Dr Prashant Bhad, assistant commissioner, animal husbandry department, Maharashtra, while remaining non-committed on the date of the launch, said, "This is a central government project. Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Gujarat have started using the emergency, toll-free, veterinary medical service and now Maharashtra will be the fourth to do the same."

The state animal husbandry department has identified 349 vulnerable areas in which 80 mobile care centres and 80 call centres will be established. The concept is basically to provide

immediate healthcare relief and medical care to an ailing animal. It is an animal husbandry service meant only for farm animals.

“The ministry of animal husbandry believes this is the right time to provide veterinary health services, as there are many animals suffering due to the recent flood and need immediate attention,” said Mahadev Jankar, minister of animal husbandry, dairy development and fisheries development, Maharashtra.

Dr Bhad said, “The toll-free number 1962, basically, is an ambulance and will treat ailing animals on the spot. Through this service not only will we have the data now on how many animals require treatment, but will also be able to look into the number of notifications we receive through these call centres.”

“Services will also include treatment of zoonotic diseases which will be provided by our veterinary doctor along with his team at the spot,” he added.

“We will be categorising the animal patient in three categories—A, B and C. Category A will require immediate attention and admission, which includes an animal patient that needs life support and immediate shifting to a nearby veterinary hospital. Category B is injured, but not critical and category C is basic/minimum injuries. Currently there are 4,847 veterinary hospitals run by the state in Maharashtra,” said Dr Bhad.