

China embarks on 'one dog' policy

In an effort to implement China's 'one dog' policy and check rising cases of rabies, the police will embark on a special drive to crack down on illegal pet dogs from Nov 16.

The campaign aims to check illegal pet businesses in Beijing and ensure that citizens have licence for their dogs, local police said.

In the first three quarters of this year, China recorded 2,254 rabies cases, an increase of 29.69 percent over the same period last year.

The police found six unlicensed dogs this week when they made house calls in Beijing's luxury villa areas to check on illegal dog keeping.

The city will implement 'one dog' policy for each household in nine major management zones, aimed at fighting rabies, which claimed 318 lives nationwide in September.

The nine zones are Dongcheng, Xicheng, Chongwen, Xuanwu, Chaoyang, Haidian, Fengtai, Shijingshan and Yizhuang economic development zone.

The government has decided to be particularly tough on those keeping ferocious dogs. Only smaller pet dogs, no more than 35 cm tall have been permitted.

Ferocious looking dogs above 35 cm, such as Mastiffs, Dobermans, Saint Bernards and Great Danes have been banned.

The policy said only visually handicapped people or those with serious physical disability are allowed to keep guide dogs or service dogs.

Beijing has more than 550,000 registered dogs, up 20 percent from the previous year.

The ministry of health website shows that 2,660 people in China died of rabies in 2004, compared with 159 reported fatalities in 1996.

(© IANS / India eNews)