

Case Study: Rakibul Haq Emil's Conduct in the 2020 Kalua's Homes Shelter Crisis

Background of the Crisis and Emil's Role

In mid-2020, a shocking animal welfare scandal emerged at **Kalua's Homes**, a private shelter in Dhaka. Acting on complaints of neglect, **Rakibul Haq Emil** – founder of the People for Animal Welfare (PAW) Foundation – led a team of activists to inspect the shelter[1]. What they found was horrific. Emil later recounted: *"We found that there were at least 80 dogs and 18 cats in the shelter, many of them on the brink of death... It was a gruesome situation"*[2]. Photographic evidence showed dozens of emaciated dogs crammed into a filthy tin shed and sick cats confined in small cages[3]. Food provided to the animals was *"inedible and covered with mould,"* and no proper medical treatment or record-keeping was in place[3]. In short, conditions at Kalua's Homes amounted to severe animal cruelty and neglect.

Faced with this situation, Emil and seven other activists decided immediate intervention was necessary. On June 6, 2020, they confronted the shelter's operator, Naim *alias* "Adi da Guru," with a list of urgent reforms. Naim signed a handwritten agreement committing to expand the shelter space (to separate healthy and sick animals), to improve hygiene, and to document each animal's care[4]. However, within 48 hours Naim abruptly abdicated responsibility. On June 8, he announced via Facebook Live that he was *"not in a state to look after"* the shelter and fled the city, abandoning the animals[5].

With the proprietor gone, **Emil effectively assumed control** of the crisis by default. PAW Foundation volunteers and independent rescuers stepped in to provide emergency relief – delivering food, cleaning enclosures, and offering whatever basic medical aid they could to stabilize the most critical cases[6][7]. Emil was seen on-site coordinating veterinary visits and searching for foster homes for animals in dire condition during the week after Naim's departure[8][9]. For several weeks in June 2020, Emil and his colleagues essentially **ran Kalua's Homes in a caretaker capacity**, working to keep the animals alive until a more permanent solution could be arranged[9]. During this period (up until early July), they posted regular updates to inform the public about the rescue operation's progress and needs.

On **July 4, 2020**, a new coalition of activists from other organizations (notably Animal Lovers of Bangladesh (ALB) and the Animal Care Society of Bangladesh) agreed to take over the shelter's management. Emil's group handed **responsibility** for Kalua's Homes to this incoming team[10]. At the handover, ALB's leader Dipanwita Ridi announced in a Facebook Live that Naim (the original owner) would be allowed to *"continue running the shelter under [their] team's strict supervision,"* with promises to install CCTV and ensure all animals received proper care[11]. Emil stepped back from active operations at that point, as the crisis leadership transitioned. However, as we analyze below, **Emil's conduct during the intervention – including his statements,**

actions, and omissions – raises serious ethical and legal questions despite his initial heroic role in exposing the abuse.

Emil's Actions and Omissions During the Intervention

As founder of PAW Foundation and a high-profile animal rights advocate, Rakibul Haq Emil took on multiple roles in the Kalua's Homes saga. His notable **actions** included:

- **Investigative Raid (May–June 2020):** Emil organized and led the on-site inspections on May 30 and June 6, uncovering evidence of extreme neglect. He documented the scene (photographs of starving animals, unsanitary conditions, etc.) and spoke to the media to raise the alarm^{[2][3]}. By publicizing the cruelty, he galvanized public pressure on the authorities to pay attention.
- **Attempted Shelter Reform:** After the June 6 visit, Emil helped draft a 10-point improvement plan for the shelter and obtained Naim's signature on it. This shows Emil initially tried a cooperative approach – giving the operator a chance to reform under activist guidance.
- **Public Communications:** Throughout the crisis, Emil maintained a public-facing role. He gave interviews (e.g. describing the “*gruesome*” shelter conditions^[2]) and used social media to update concerned followers about the rescue operation. For example, Emil appeared in Facebook Live videos from the shelter site, explaining what was being done for the animals. However, as discussed later, the tone and content of some of these communications (at least one devolved into lighthearted banter) drew criticism given the grim circumstances.
- **Legal Initiatives:** Importantly, Emil did not limit his response to just animal care – he also pursued **accountability** for the abuse. On June 12, 2020, he went to Hazaribagh Police Station with fellow activists to help file a General Diary (GD) report against Naim, accusing him of animal cruelty (and supporting a young woman “Riya” who alleged sexual harassment by Naim). Emil similarly assisted another rescuer (“Barsha”) in filing a GD at a different police station on June 15 regarding her puppies that died due to Naim's negligence. Recognizing the limitations of police action under general laws, Emil then invoked Bangladesh's new **Animal Welfare Act 2019**: he coordinated with the government's Department of Livestock Services (DLS) to conduct an official inspection of Kalua's Homes on June 29. He personally accompanied the DLS veterinary officer during the inspection to ensure a thorough report. The DLS report, submitted in early July 2020, confirmed the shelter's abysmal conditions and unlicensed operation, recommending “necessary legal steps” for animal cruelty violations. Armed with this, Emil and others prepared to file a court case under the Animal Welfare Act to formally prosecute Naim.

By all appearances, these actions paint Emil as a committed activist responding on multiple fronts: rescue, public awareness, and legal enforcement. Indeed, **initial public perception praised Emil** for stepping up. However, a closer examination reveals

several **omissions and lapses** on his part that tempered the effectiveness of the intervention:

- **Inadequate Medical Triage:** Despite Emil's presence and coordination, many animals did not receive prompt professional medical treatment during the crucial first weeks after rescue. Volunteers provided only basic first aid. Emil's team did not (or perhaps could not) get a veterinarian to attend to all the seriously ill animals immediately. One stark example is "**Molly**," a Persian-mix cat rescued from the shelter on June 13. Molly was rescued by a volunteer (Nahar Chakladar) because she was in **very bad condition** – "half-dead," in the words of one activist. Molly died on July 11, 2020, effectively from the neglect she had suffered. This tragic outcome indicates a failure to deliver truly **urgent veterinary care**. "I saw her panting", Emil had replied on messenger, when asked about Molly by her owner.
- **Lack of Transparently Coordinated Care:** Emil assumed a caretaker role, but there was no clear system for monitoring each animal's recovery or fate under his watch. Just as Naim had kept no medical records, the rescuers also struggled to organize the chaos. Emil did not implement any formal tracking of the animals' health status after June 8. This omission meant that when animals started dying in the weeks after the raid, it was hard to know exactly how many or why. By some accounts, **multiple animals continued to die in June–July 2020 even after being "rescued."** One Bangladeshi blog claimed that as many as 65 *animals died* during the post-raid transition period. While that figure is unverified, even Emil's fellow activists acknowledged that "*many of the animals were in critical condition by the time [the new team] arrived*" and some could not be saved. The bottom line is that **dozens of animals might have perished on Emil's watch**, reflecting either the overwhelming scale of the crisis or lapses in emergency response – or both. If proper medical triage and shelter had been arranged faster, some of these lives might have been saved. This raises uncomfortable questions about **negligence**: once Emil intervened and assumed de facto responsibility for these animals, did he also assume a duty of care that he failed to fully meet? (We return to the legal implications of this point later.)
- **Poor Coordination & Infighting:** As the initial coordinator, Emil could have set a collaborative tone with all rescuers. Instead, the rescue effort became fragmented. By early July, a rift developed between Emil's group and the incoming ALB/ACSB group, rooted in **ego and mistrust**. Communication broke down. Emil stepped aside as ALB took charge, but there was evident friction over credit and control. This disunity proved harmful: it delayed a seamless transfer of animal care and created confusion over who was accountable for the remaining sick animals. *Testimony suggests that this "two-group" power struggle led to lapses in animal care during the handover.* From a leadership perspective, Emil bears some responsibility for failing to maintain unity. As a veteran activist, he knew the focus should remain on the animals' welfare rather than personal or organizational rivalries. Yet he either could not or did not prevent the rescue

operation from deteriorating into a factional dispute. The animals were the ultimate victims of this discord.

- **Private Reality:** Molly the cat, again, is illustrative – she was in rescue custody under activists’ care when her condition deteriorated fatally. Emil never publicly acknowledged these failures. There was no comprehensive report to donors or the public detailing how many animals survived, how many died, and why. This lack of forthright accounting undermines Emil’s credibility and the trust that animal welfare work hinges on. **In private, Emil even distanced himself from responsibility** – when the owner of Molly and Hulo begged for help, *“Emil... informed me that he would not be able to take responsibility for my two cats,”* the owner recalls. This statement is striking: despite orchestrating the intervention that took those cats out of Kalua’s Homes, Emil declined to be responsible for their fate thereafter. It suggests a desire to limit liability at odds with the moral responsibility he had assumed by intervening. More on that later.

In summary, **Emil’s conduct was a mix of commendable initiative and serious shortfalls**. He took charge bravely and did more than perhaps any other individual to expose the cruelty at Kalua’s Homes. Yet by stepping into the role of rescuer and temporary caretaker, he implicitly shouldered obligations that, in key moments, he failed to fulfil adequately (timely veterinary care, coordination, and accountability for outcomes). The following sections scrutinize these ethical and legal responsibilities in greater detail, and examine how Emil’s own statements compare to the verifiable events.

Ethical and Legal Responsibilities Assumed by Emil

When Rakibul Haq Emil chose to **enter the premises** of Kalua’s Homes and lead the intervention, he implicitly assumed certain **ethical and legal responsibilities** toward the animals and the public. These can be analyzed on a few levels:

- **Duty of Care to Animals:** By taking control of abused animals, Emil had an ethical duty – and arguably a legal one under animal welfare laws – to ensure their well-being. Under Bangladesh’s *Animal Welfare Act 2019*, anyone “in charge” of an animal must not subject it to unnecessary suffering or neglect. In the period from June 8 to July 4, Emil and his team were *in charge* of the Kalua’s Homes animals in lieu of the owner. This means they had a responsibility to provide adequate food, water, shelter, and medical attention. Failing to do so could constitute **animal neglect** on their part, even if their intentions were good. Unfortunately, as noted, multiple animals died or suffered worsening illness during this interim *for lack of proper treatment*. The fact that the animals were already in bad shape does not erase the rescuers’ obligation to prevent further suffering. If anything, it heightened it. Legally, had any formal complaint been made against the rescuers for negligence (none was, to our knowledge), authorities would have to investigate whether Emil’s team fulfilled the minimum duty of care required. The ethical expectation is clear: if you intervene to “rescue” animals, you must not leave them to die due to poor follow-through. Such an

allegation, if proven, indicates a breach of the duty of care by those who took responsibility (Emil's group, PAW).

- **Duty of Candor and Transparency:** As the public voice of the rescue operation, Emil had a responsibility to communicate honestly with both authorities and the concerned public. This includes accurately reporting the. Emil did well in highlighting the cruelty initially – his vivid descriptions to the press were truthful and spurred action[2]. However, once he took charge, **Emil's communications became less forthcoming about the setbacks.** For example, there is no record of Emil publicly reporting the subsequent animal deaths that occurred in June/July 2020. Instead, these grim details emerged later through whistleblowers and eyewitnesses. Internally, Emil knew many animals were dying; This lack of full disclosure might not violate a specific law, but it is ethically problematic. Stakeholders – from law enforcement to donors – depend on accurate information. If animals continued to perish, Emil should have been transparent. By not openly acknowledging those losses, Emil arguably prioritized **image over accountability.** Moreover, when Emil handed the shelter to the next team, there was little public documentation of how many animals were handed over alive versus how many had already died. This obscures any accounting of success or failure. In a crisis of this magnitude, ethical leadership calls for transparency about challenges, not just self-congratulation for the rescue. Emil fell short in this regard.
- **Responsibility to Work Within Legal Boundaries:** Emil's decision to *raid* the shelter (entering private property to seize animals) was driven by urgency, but it walked a fine legal line. Technically, the activists had no official authority on June 6 or June 8 to remove animals – they acted out of moral necessity. This could have exposed them to allegations of trespass or even theft of animals. However, Naim's voluntary handover on June 8 and the subsequent involvement of police/DLS gave post-facto legitimacy to the intervention. Emil was careful to involve the authorities as soon as possible (filing GDs, inviting DLS), which was prudent legally. One could argue that by stepping into a quasi-enforcement role, Emil assumed a **duty to ensure a lawful process** thereafter. He did push for legal action against Naim, which is to his credit. But the outcome – or lack thereof – of that legal process raises questions (discussed in the next section). Another legal aspect is **responsibility for custody of animals:** once the activists took the animals, what legal status did those animals have? Ideally, the rescuers should have formally reported to authorities that they had X number of animals in protective custody. Any deaths or disappearances of those animals under their care could then be scrutinized. Emil's team did not establish any clear paper trail of custody. This could be considered a lapse in operational responsibility, as it complicates any legal accountability for what happened to each creature.
- **Public Assurances and Ethical Promises:** Emil, as a prominent activist, has long professed strong values: protecting animals from cruelty, improving shelter conditions, and demanding accountability from abusers[31][32]. By taking charge of Kalua's Homes, he implicitly promised to apply those values to this crisis.

Ethically, that meant doing everything possible to minimize animal suffering and to ensure the perpetrator could not repeat such cruelty. There is an **implicit social contract** when an activist says, “I/we have intervened” – the public trusts that the activist will handle the situation competently and compassionately. Emil reinforced this trust by making public statements during the crisis. He also encouraged the owner of Molly and Hulo to file complaints against Naim, assuring her that this was the path to justice. In doing so, Emil positioned himself as a **responsible agent of change**. Therefore, ethically, he was bound to follow through on those assurances – to actually deliver justice and improved welfare, not just talk about it. This heightens the moral failing when those outcomes did not materialize (e.g. Naim went unpunished while numerous animals died).

In essence, Emil’s responsibilities – self-assumed by virtue of his leadership role – encompassed caring for the animals, communicating truthfully, operating within the law, and upholding the very animal welfare principles he champions. The evidence indicates **significant gaps between those responsibilities and Emil’s execution of them**. This sets the stage for examining one particular theme: Emil’s strategic framing of the crisis as “not our responsibility” and whether that was compatible with his obligations as an animal advocate.

“Not Our Responsibility” – Emil’s Framing vs. Activist Obligations

A notable aspect of Rakibul Haq Emil’s conduct is the way he framed his and PAW Foundation’s role in the Kalua’s Homes crisis. On multiple occasions, he either implicitly or explicitly conveyed that *“this is not our responsibility”* – meaning that PAW was not officially accountable for what was happening, and they were just volunteers stepping in. We analyze this stance in contrast to what would be expected of a leader in animal activism:

Emil’s Own Words: While Emil may not have publicly used the exact phrase “not our responsibility” in a press release, his communications and decisions reflected that sentiment. The most direct evidence comes from a victim’s testimony: when she asked Emil (via Messenger) about the fate of her two cats during the rescue chaos, *“he informed me that he would not be able to take responsibility”* for them. This was in the context of Emil urging her to lodge a police complaint against Naim – he was willing to use her case to fortify legal action, but simultaneously distancing himself from any responsibility for the cats’ care. In essence, Emil was telling a distraught pet owner: *I’ll help you file a case, but don’t expect me to look after your animals*. Such a stance comes across as **trying to have it both ways** – taking credit for initiating action, but preemptively deflecting blame or burden.

Emil’s mindset here likely was that PAW Foundation was not a shelter operator or long-term custodian – they had intervened out of necessity, but they did not want to be saddled with the ongoing care of dozens of animals. Indeed, at the handover on July 4, Emil’s goal was to transfer responsibility to another group as quickly as possible[33]. He has since characterized PAW’s role in Kalua’s Homes as an emergency response, not a takeover. Strategically, this framing might have been meant to protect PAW from liability

and to set expectations that others (like government agencies or the new coalition) needed to step up.

Obligations of an Activist Leader: The crux, however, is that Emil's "*not our responsibility*" posture does not sit well with the **obligations of an animal welfare activist**, especially one of his standing. As the founder of a leading animal NGO, Emil is widely viewed as a voice for **accountability and compassion** in such crises. Activist obligations in a rescue scenario arguably include: taking responsibility for the outcome (at least until proper authorities or caretakers can assume duty), prioritizing the animals' interests above organizational interests, and seeing the mission through. By saying, in effect, "*we're just helping but don't blame us if things go wrong*," Emil fell short of these obligations. Animal activism, by its very nature, often requires shouldering burdens that others shirk. It was precisely because no authority had promptly rescued the Kalua's Homes animals that activists like Emil had to intervene. To then immediately disclaim responsibility is somewhat contradictory.

In plainer terms, **once Emil chose to lead the intervention, moral responsibility was his whether he liked it or not**. Activist leadership is not a pick-and-choose commitment – one cannot do the dramatic part (the raid, the media exposure) and then step away from the grittier part (caring for traumatized, sick animals) without inviting ethical scrutiny. If Emil lacked the resources or mandate to care for those animals long-term, he still had an obligation to **facilitate a safe transition** to those who could. This means vetting the new caretakers and ensuring the abuser (Naim) was definitively removed. Yet, as we know, Naim was bizarrely kept around under "supervision" and later regained control^[11]. From an activist perspective, that outcome is indefensible – it flies in the face of accountability. A leader true to activist principles would have vocally opposed leaving any animals with the very person accused of harming them. If Emil objected to ALB's decision to retain Naim, he did not do so publicly. At minimum, Emil's inability to prevent or condemn such an arrangement is a failure of advocacy for the animals' best interests.

Additionally, consider Emil's **prior and subsequent activism**. He has positioned himself (and PAW) as a relentless campaigner for animal rights, whether it be rescuing street dogs or pushing for enforcement of welfare laws^[31]. But in the gritty Kalua's case, once the initial spotlight faded, there was a retreat. Emil's "*not our responsibility*" attitude can thus be interpreted as an unwillingness to stick with a hard, thankless mission (rehabilitating 100 very ill animals) especially when it became messy and complicated. This is antithetical to the activist ethos Emil espouses – true commitment to animal welfare means persevering even when it is inconvenient or unglamorous.

In summary, Emil's strategic framing was likely an attempt to limit PAW's formal obligations, but it **conflicted with the moral leadership role** he had assumed. A founder of an animal welfare organization is expected to exemplify taking responsibility for animals in need, not avoiding it. Emil's words and actions – telling an owner he can't be responsible for her rescued pets, handing animals back to a dubious caretaker, distancing himself once the situation became convoluted – expose a rift between the **principles of activist responsibility and the practice he chose**. This rift becomes

even clearer when we juxtapose Emil's professed values with the actual outcomes of the Kalua's Homes intervention.

Contradictions Between Professed Values and Actual Outcomes

Rakibul Haq Emil's public persona and stated values suggest a deep commitment to animal protection, shelter reform, and holding abusers accountable. Indeed, since founding PAW Foundation in 2015, Emil has repeatedly spoken about **protecting animals from abuse, creating safe shelters, and enforcing laws against cruelty**[38]. However, the events and outcomes of the Kalua's Homes crisis reveal stark contradictions between those ideals and what transpired under Emil's leadership in 2020. Key contradictions include:

- **“Rescue and Protect” vs. Ongoing Animal Harm:** Emil's core mission is to rescue animals from harm. Initially, the Kalua's Homes operation was exactly that – a rescue from a cruel situation. But *did it ultimately protect the animals?* Tragically, **many animals continued to suffer and die even after being “rescued.”** Emil's team saved them from Adi Guru's neglect only for some to perish due to what can be termed **post-rescue neglect**. Witness accounts suggest numerous unnamed dogs and cats also succumbed during the chaotic transition. This is a devastating outcome diametrically opposed to the goal of rescue. In blunt terms, **animals continued to die on Emil's watch**, undermining the very premise of his intervention. Emil's values would dictate that every possible effort be made to keep those animals alive and safe; the reality is that did not happen.
- **Shelter Reform vs. Status Quo Ante:** Emil pushed for reforms at Kalua's Homes (through the 10-point plan) and later endorsed handing the shelter to a new management that vowed improvements[11]. His stated aim was to turn a negligent shelter into a model of proper care. But what actually happened? Within months, **Naim “Adi Guru” was back in control of Kalua's Homes**, essentially restoring the status quo ante. Naim has been reportedly running the shelter and soliciting donations publicly. This indicates that any reforms Emil sought were fleeting at best. The shelter did not undergo a lasting transformation – it reverted to the same individual previously found responsible for abuse. This outcome makes Emil's intervention look like a temporary band-aid rather than real reform. It contradicts his advocacy for sustainable improvements in animal welfare. From a broader perspective, it casts doubt on the efficacy of the rescue: if the abuser ends up right back in charge, one might ask as one victim did, *“So why did [PAW] raid this shelter home?”*. The contradiction here is between **Emil's goal of an improved shelter** and the **actual relapse into mismanagement** that occurred.
- **Accountability for Abuser vs. Impunity:** A pillar of Emil's philosophy is that animal abusers should face legal consequences. He went to notable lengths initially – filing police reports and preparing a case under the Animal Welfare Act. However, the outcome has been a failure of accountability. As noted, Naim (Adi Guru) faced *no meaningful punishment*. Despite the DLS's damning report and

all the public outrage, by all accounts Naim was neither jailed nor barred from operating. The promised legal case under the 2019 Act either stalled or was dropped quietly; no conviction was publicized. Emil's team had proclaimed they were *"in the process of filing a case"* in July 2020, yet years later Naim remains at large, continuing his activities. This is a glaring contradiction: **Emil professed accountability, but delivered impunity** (at least in effect). One might argue the slow Bangladesh legal system is to blame, but activists had other means – for instance, pressing for Naim's prosecution via media or lobbying – which seem to have been abandoned once public attention moved on. The inconsistency between Emil's advocacy for legal justice and the reality of **zero lasting consequences** for the perpetrator is a key point that authorities and watchdogs should note. It suggests a lack of follow-through that runs counter to Emil's image as a crusader for enforcement. As the critical analysis by one observer noted, *"If a case was filed, why did it fail to stop Adi Guru? Was it pursued vigorously, or quietly dropped once public attention waned?"*. That pointed question encapsulates the accountability gap.

- **Promise of Transparency vs. Lack of Accountability:** Emil's values include transparency in how shelters and NGOs operate (he often speaks against misuse of donor funds or lack of records). Ironically, in the Kalua's Homes case, there has been **little transparency about the rescuers' own management**. No clear report was ever published by PAW or the coalition detailing what went wrong in June–July 2020. Donations were collected to feed and treat the Kalua's animals (many well-wishers sent money or supplies during the crisis), but there has been no accounting for how those resources were used and why they were insufficient to prevent further deaths. Emil did not ensure a public debrief or a lessons-learned report, which one might expect given his stance on accountability. To this day, much of what we know about the failings comes from whistleblowers and victims, not from Emil's own disclosures. This lack of **self-accountability** clashes with Emil's calls for accountability in others. As one analysis summarized, *"Have any of the activists acknowledged or answered for these failures? It appears not... There has been no transparent accounting of how donations were used, how animals were cared for (or not), and why the shelter was effectively handed back to the alleged perpetrator."* Emil's credibility as a proponent of transparency is thus undermined by the opacity surrounding the outcome of the intervention he led.

It is important to stress that these contradictions do not necessarily imply malicious intent on Emil's part; they may well reflect being overwhelmed, making poor decisions under stress, or other human failings. However, **from a legal-intellectual standpoint, contradictions between stated values and actual outcomes can be significant**. They can indicate negligence (e.g., failing to live up to one's own standard of care), and they can erode the trust that courts and communities place in activists' self-regulation. In evaluating Emil's conduct, one must weigh what *should* have happened given his commitments versus what *did* happen. The stark divergence between the two is a central theme of this case study.

To illustrate the overall outcome: After all the raids, lives, and legal steps, *Adi Guru* faced no lasting punishment, dozens of animals died or had to be re-rescued, and many pet owners lost her beloved pets forever. This concluding observation (drawn from a contemporaneous analysis) perfectly encapsulates the tragic irony and the failure to align actions with principles in this case.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The 2020 Kalua's Homes shelter crisis in Bangladesh began as a clear-cut case of animal abuse by a shelter operator, but it ended up also casting a harsh light on those who intervened – notably Rakibul Haq Emil. This analysis has critically examined Emil's conduct as PAW Foundation's founder during the crisis, focusing on his public statements, direct actions, omissions, and assumed responsibilities. The findings suggest that while Emil's **intentions were laudable and his initial actions were courageous**, there were significant failures in execution that carry ethical and potential legal implications.

From a **legal perspective**, authorities and watchdog organizations should consider the following points that emerge from Emil's role:

- **Possible Negligence and Duty of Care Breach:** Once Emil took charge of the animals (even informally), he had a duty of care toward them. The evidence of continued neglect and preventable animal deaths during the rescue operation could be viewed as negligence. If we analogize this to a human rescue scenario, it's as if some victims pulled from danger were then lost due to the rescuers' mishandling – a serious matter. Bangladesh's Animal Welfare Act 2019 defines failing to provide adequate food, shelter, or medical care as offenses. If any animal perished because the rescuers did not arrange timely care (when it was feasible to do so), that is arguably a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the law. It may warrant investigation into **whether the intervening parties inadvertently caused harm**. At the very least, it calls for an inquiry into crisis management standards for animal welfare groups.
- **Accountability and Legal Follow-through:** Emil's conduct should be evaluated in the context of the promised legal action. If a formal case was indeed filed under the Animal Welfare Act (as activists claimed) but later dropped or allowed to languish, there may have been a failure of diligence. Was there any **agreement or settlement** behind closed doors that allowed Naim to escape consequences? If so, did Emil or his associates acquiesce to it? These questions merit attention from law enforcement and funding partners. The fact that *Naim "Adi Guru" is back in business as of 2025, openly running the same shelter*, is a damning indicator that the *activists' self-congratulated "rescue" did not achieve lasting protection for the animals*. This is not just a moral issue but a legal one – it suggests that the enforcement mechanism (to which Emil was a party) failed. For animal rights NGOs to retain credibility, they must ensure that documented abusers are actually prosecuted or at least barred. Emil's case could serve as a basis for **policy recommendations**, such as involving independent monitors to

track the progress of any legal case initiated by private complainants in animal cruelty matters.

- **Need for External Oversight:** Ultimately, one lesson from this case is that volunteer activists, no matter how well-known, should not be left to handle large-scale animal crises alone without oversight or support. Emil's dual role as activist and quasi-enforcer created conflicts of interest and accountability gaps. For instance, once he became a caretaker, he was less inclined to advertise any failures publicly, which impeded transparency. Going forward, authorities (such as the DLS or police) might establish a framework wherein, during shelter raids or seizures, the government quickly takes custody or formally deputizes specific NGOs with defined responsibility. In June 2020, Emil filled a void left by official inaction – but then who watches the watchdog? The absence of a formal structure enabled the lapses we've detailed. **Legal professionals reviewing this case might strongly urge the creation of a task force or MoU between government and animal welfare groups** to handle shelter crises, to ensure clear lines of responsibility.

From an **ethical standpoint**, this case study urges a hard look at activist accountability. Emil's prior reputation was that of a principled, effective activist. The Kalua's Homes crisis, however, exposed weaknesses that can no longer be ignored under the banner of "good intentions." As one insider analysis bluntly concluded: *"Good intentions were undermined by poor execution, infighting, and possibly self-interest... The end result speaks louder than early promises"*. For Emil, if he is to continue as a leader in this field, a period of reflection and reform is needed. He would need to reconcile his actions with his professed values, perhaps publicly acknowledge mistakes, and implement safeguards to restore trust.

In closing, **this case is a cautionary tale**. It demonstrates that even those with a mandate to do good can falter, and when they do, it is the voiceless animals who pay the price. Emil's conduct during the Kalua's Homes crisis should be carefully evaluated by the relevant authorities (law enforcement, the Department of Livestock Services, etc.), animal welfare watchdogs, and the boards of animal NGOs. If evidence of negligence or dereliction of duty is found, appropriate steps – ranging from corrective training to legal action – should be considered. Short of legal liability, the moral liability is clear: the intervention did not live up to its promise.

For the sake of preventing similar failures, the following key steps are recommended:

- **Official Investigation:** A thorough investigation into the **"mismanagement of the rescue"** should be undertaken. This would clarify how many animals died, why decisions like keeping Naim involved were made, and who bears responsibility for each decision. Such an investigation could be led by an independent animal welfare board or a committee of experts, and its findings should be made public.
- **Clear Guidelines for Activist Interventions:** Develop standard operating procedures for NGO interventions in animal cruelty cases. This should cover

chain-of-custody for animals, minimum care standards during transitional rescue, documentation requirements. Had such guidelines existed and been followed, Emil and his team might have avoided some pitfalls.

- **Empowerment and Accountability via Law:** Use the Animal Welfare Act 2019 proactively. The Kalua's Homes case was one of the first big tests of that law. Activists like Emil did invoke it, but the enforcement sputtered out. Moving forward, authorities should streamline how activists can trigger enforcement and how courts handle such cases. Additionally, consider amendments or complementary regulations that make it easier to temporarily shut down a problematic shelter and relocate animals under official care, rather than relying wholly on volunteers.
- **Internal Review within PAW Foundation:** PAW's board or trustees (if any) should conduct their **own review of Emil's handling** of this crisis. This is important for organizational learning. As the founder, Emil might have outsized influence, but accountability must apply within the NGO as well. Training, better resource allocation, and perhaps sharing responsibilities (so no single person is overburdened) are potential improvements. PAW should also establish a policy on conflicts of interest and interactions with other groups to mitigate infighting in joint rescue operations.

This case study, focusing on Rakibul Haq Emil, does not diminish the fact that Naim "Adi Guru" is the primary wrongdoer who created the crisis. However, once others stepped in, the moral and possibly legal onus shifted onto them to **finish the rescue properly**. Emil's conduct during that critical period is a lesson that **good intentions must be backed by competence and integrity**. Activists are not above scrutiny; when lives are at stake, they must be prepared to be held to a high standard. As one distressed pet owner implored after losing her cat in this fiasco: *"There should be a proper investigation and justice for... how my cat died due to neglect... Why was the shelter taken over by [PAW], and how many animals' welfare are they truly concerned with?"*. Those questions remain as pertinent now as they were in 2020. It is in the interest of justice – for both animals and people – that they be addressed with seriousness and candor.

[1] [2] [3] [10] [11] [25] [33] Worse off at a shelter | The Daily Star

<https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/worse-shelter-1926741>

[31] [32] [38] PAW - an organisation dedicated to rescuing injured animals in Bangladesh

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