



To,

Date: 22nd May 2020

Shri Giriraj Singh,
Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying,
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Dr. Sujit Kumar Dutta
Secretary, Animal Welfare Board of India & Dy. Commissioner (NLM) Ministry of
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Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
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**Subject: Notify the pending 2018 draft ban on all Animals in Circuses and
Mobile Entertainment Facilities**

Dear Sir,

Thank you so much for your feedback on our letter seeking a ban on animals in circuses, especially in light of COVID.

Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO) is India's apex animal rights organisation. Created for the movement, by the movement, FIAPO is India's only federation with more than 125 members and over 200 supporter organisations nationally.

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We are writing with a further submission that animals are *not central* to running of circuses. People come to circuses to get entertained, to watch performances, magic and a range of tricks. The role of circuses as a platform of entertainment is critical and highly valued. However, the collective moral compass of our society is changing, and people do not want to see another sentient being suffer for the sake of entertainment.

1. Between 1991-1998 India banned lions, tigers, bears, monkeys and panthers from circuses. India was one of the first country to take such a noble step. There were many concerns that circuses will not survive after this partial ban on wild animals, however, circuses have continued to operate across the country despite the elimination of the aforesaid five wild animals.
2. In 2006, the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Bachpan Bachao Andolan* banned the use of children in circuses. There is no reported evidence to suggest that circuses have suffered any losses because of the absence of children. Our evolved moral compass today would never allow children in circuses.
3. Since 2016, AWBI has not provided any approval for use of fresh elephants in circuses, this has also, we submit, not altered circus performances or revenues.
4. We respectfully submit that circus play a critical role to entertain, educate and inspire people with the greatness of human imagination, skills and performance art. This can be done without showing cruelty towards children or animals. The absence of use of animals and children in circuses only provides a platform for positive pedagogy.
5. Please find a *list* of Animal Free Circuses from around the world attached.
6. Eliminating the use of animals from circuses has the additional welcome effect of *reducing cost*. We cite the example of Circus Vargas in Los Angeles, United States: "In addition to assigning workers double duty to keep costs down, [Circus Vargas](#) long ago ended its animal acts, which eliminated the

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expense of caring for and housing the creatures as well as cut the need to meet strict animal welfare regulations. Ringling Bros. cited changing public attitudes toward animal acts and tough animal welfare regulations as key reasons why it retired its elephants last year."

7. One of the largest circus companies in the world- arguably the most popular circus globally - is the [Canadian "Cirque-du-Soliel" which is completely animal-free](#). This confirms that *animals are not central to the fame, success and creativity* of circuses at all. Cirque du Soliel reinvented itself by doing away with animal shows (considered a traditional aspect of the industry) but also one of its most expensive, including the cost of training, medical care, housing, insurance and transportation. In addition animals only increased [public discomfort](#).
8. Finally, (and as shown in our earlier letter) COVID-19 has demonstrated both the additional economic and health risks of keeping animals in circuses, both of which can be avoided in *animal free* circuses.
9. With all business, and especially entertainment businesses like Circus we need to **evolve** with time, while it is challenging, it is a fair price to pay for creating **just and ethical practices**.

We thank you for your time and request you urge the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to notify the pending November 2018 Draft Ban on Animals in Circuses and any mobile entertainment facility.

Warm Regards,

Varda Mehrotra, Executive Director

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