



ANIMAL CONCERN

PO Box 5178, Dumbarton G82 5YJ.
Telephone: 01389-841639. Mobile: 07721-605521

E-mail: animals@jfrobbins.force9.co.uk Website: www.animalconcern.org



Shri Anil Madhav Dave Honourable Minister,
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
4th Floor,
Aakash Block,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
New Delhi – 110003,
India

5th February 2017

Appeal to legislate against use of animals in circuses

Dear Sir,

I write in support of the campaign to pass legislation to ban the use of animals in circuses in India, a campaign promoted by the Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO) under the banner “End Circus Suffering”.

No doubt many organisations will have written to inform you of the great cruelty which can be inflicted on circus animals through capture from the wild, captive breeding programmes and forcing them to obey commands and perform tricks by inflicting pain and installing fear in the animals.

Rather than repeat the very real horrors you will have heard from other campaigners I would like to tell you of my personal experience of investigating some of the best run circuses in Scotland.

I have seen elephants, camels, zebra and other animals chained for weeks in a tiny ramshackle barn between the end of the autumn circus season and the start of the Christmas circus season. The elephants could touch the rear of the barn with their tails and the front with their trunks.

I discovered circus animals housed in an old warehouse in Glasgow for a month during which the circus owner had no bookings.

In the beautiful Scottish city of Perth I witnessed a troupe of large dogs being taken from the circus ring and returned to their “home” – cages in a windowless van. The same circus had a bear which had been driven totally mad though years of close captivity and could not even be let out of his cage.

While debating on BBC Radio I got a circus owner to admit that his troupe of elephants had only had one hour of exercise in three days – a walk around a Glasgow car park.

Circus animals are kept in tiny cages for most of their lives and develop repetitive behaviour problems. Big cats circle their cages for days on end. Elephants swing their heads from side to side while chained to the floor by two and sometimes three heavy leg chains.

Even the very best circus is a terribly cruel place to keep animals.

I hope the Indian Government will soon legislate to save animals from such suffering.

Very best wishes from Scotland.

Yours faithfully,

John F Robins,
Secretary to Animal Concern