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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE
Central Zoo Authority

F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.I)(AK)/2498/2016

DATE: 01.09.2016

To

Chief Wildlife Warden of all States and UTs,

Subject: Circus elephants – illegal performances and transfer in violation of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 - regarding

Sir,

Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Hon'ble Minister, Women and Child Development, Government of India has brought to the notice of this Authority, following pertaining to captive elephants in Circuses:

1. That many Circuses use elephants for performances in blatant violation of the law and they boldly advertise the acts (copy enclosed of one such advertisement),
2. That many Circuses are disposing off or selling their elephants illegally under pretext and guise of:
 - a. Gifting to temples,
 - b. Inability to care for them,
 - c. Lack of space,
 - d. Handing over to relatives or acquaintances for upkeep and care.
3. That the elephants are being sold off and shifted to Jaipur in Rajasthan, Kerala, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam for illegal elephant trafficking.

In this regard it is to state that the Circuses are covered under the definition of zoos under Section 2(39) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The elephants being Schedule I animal under the Act can be acquired or transferred only with the prior approval of the CZA under Section 38-I of the Act. The copy of this authority letter F.No.25-1/2002-CZA(Vol.I)(AK)2436/2016 dated 18.08.2016 in the matter is enclosed for perusal.

Keeping in view the sensitivity of the matter it is requested that the Wildlife Wardens in your State may please be apprised of the above with an advise to initiate appropriate action under the law against the Circus in case of illegal performance / advertisement by them or transfer / acquisition of the elephants.

Yours sincerely

(Dr. D.N. Singh)
Member Secretary

Enclosure: as above

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22/9/16