

Richa Chadha

8 August 2018

Shri Piyush Goyal
Honourable Minister of Coal and Railways
Ministry of Coal
Federation of Railway Officers Association Office
256-A
Rail Bhavan
Raisina Road
New Delhi 110 001

Dear Shri Goyal Ji,

I am writing on behalf of my friends at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India. Recently, a speeding train struck and killed a family of elephants in Odisha, adding to a toll that makes India the nation with the highest number of train accidents involving these animals – even though the elephant is our country's national heritage animal. I respectfully request that your ministry work with the appropriate state governments to formulate a plan for preventing deadly train collisions with elephants on India's busy railways.

As an animal-protection advocate, I care deeply about all of our country's wildlife. Asian elephants are considered to be endangered, and there are – at most – only 50,000 of them left worldwide. Yet, between 2016 and 2017, dozens of elephants were killed in India because of trains, and over the years, the number of these types of deaths has been increasing. In a span of 23 years, from 1987 to 2010, 150 elephants died while crossing railway tracks, but in only eight years, from 2009 to 2017, 120 were killed in the same way.

I respectfully request that among the solutions implemented, states be required to survey and monitor railway lines for elephant activity and to reduce and restrict train speeds in corridors frequented by these animals in order to save lives. Additionally, posting signs in areas where elephants are present can alert drivers to their presence and remind them to slow down.

It is clear that global public opinion is swaying strongly in favour of animal protection. Recently, lions killed five poachers in Africa, and while all deaths are tragic, many people understood that the animals acted in self-defence.

Since Asian elephant populations are dwindling fast, India has a responsibility to protect this species. Let's do it for our country's heritage – as well as for the love of God's beautiful creation.

Thank you for giving this important issue the attention that it deserves. May I please hear back from you? I can be reached through my friend Sachin Bangera at SachinB@petaindia.org.

Respectfully,



Richa Chadha