

VIRAT KOHLI

29 November 2018

Shri Gajendra Singh Khimsar
Minister for Forest, Environment, Youth Affairs and Sports
6316 Mantralaya Bhawan
18-D, Civil Lines
Jaipur 302 006

Dear Honourable Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of my friends at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India to request that you swiftly confiscate and transfer an elephant known simply as “Number 44” to a rehabilitation facility for immediate care. A picture of mahouts violently attacking this animal – who is forced to haul tourists up and down the hill at Amer Fort – has already gone viral and damaged India’s reputation for respecting animals.


As a professional cricketer, I am proud to represent our country, but when I learned about the hateful attack on Number 44 last June, I felt so ashamed. I use a bat to hit cricket balls, but the thought of someone using an object like a bat to strike an elephant makes me sick. Violence against animals is completely unacceptable, not to mention illegal, and our nation cannot fail elephants this way.

Number 44 needs your help. Her custodian is still bullying her into carrying tourists in the heat at Amer Fort, despite the public condemnation of her attack and inspections authorised by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) that have exposed, time and again, routine and systemic abuse of elephants used for rides at Amer Fort. AWBI-appointed inspectors documented that elephants who suffer from tuberculosis and visual impairment are used for rides. They also reported that some of these animals have open wounds or foot ailments and exhibit signs of acute psychological stress from constant tethering and beatings with prohibited weapons. Maimed elephants were also found, and trainers denied them adequate veterinary care and food and forced injured animals to carry people in intense heat. Yet this cruelty continues under the jurisdiction of the Rajasthan Forest Department.

Elephants deserve so much more from India, and we must improve the way we coexist with these gentle, beautiful giants. I beseech you to start helping them by transferring Number 44 to a reputable rehabilitation facility where she can get the care she needs, socialise with others of her kind, and live free from chains, abuse, and fear.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response. I can be reached through my friend Sachin Bangera of PETA India at SachinB@petaindia.org.

Respectfully,



Virat Kohli