

Animal Update in the Great Rowshan Circus of Bangladesh

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Abstract: 'The Great Rowshan Circus' is one of the oldest and renowned circus team of Bangladesh. This team is performing their various acts with animals from 1965. In this satellite world, this type of circus is totally different to the people. Most people like it and get enjoy with their family. For entertaining all sorts of people the trained workers of the circus team show their unbelievable acts. After seeing this circus activities several times and discussing with the workers many information on animals were collected. At present, this team has only 5 types of animals- Domestic Horse, Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Rhesus Monkey (*Macaca mulatta*), Japanese Spitz, and Asian Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*), and In the year 2013, they had 8 types of animals. Due to course of time, maximum were died for their old age, some could not cope with different environment, and some were escaped from the cage. In addition, dysentery and colic pain were the common ailments of those animals. Japanese Spitz and Horse are domestic whereas Rhesus Monkey, Asian Black Bear, and Asian Elephant are wild. The food items of these animals are good but the cage size of bear needs to enlarge. This study was conducted in the year 2019.

Keywords: Animal update; Rowshan Circus; Cultural tradition; Wildlife Act; Saidpur; Bangladesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

From a Greek word 'krikos' meaning circle/ring the word circus has been coined. A circus team is considered a travelling company of performers that may include clowns, acrobats, acts, music, hoppers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, unicyclists, and animal acts. The dimension of circus was adopted by Philip Astley to enable a horse rider in circus and he added tumblers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, performing dogs, and a clown and finally created the modern circus first. In England, circuses were often a combination of the circus, the menagerie and the variety theatre, where animals such as lion and elephant from time to time appeared in the ring (Wikipedia.org). In the year 1928, a great movie named 'The Circus', directed by Sir Charlie Chaplin and others were Circus (1936), The Greatest Show on Earth (1952), The Big Circus (1959), Jumbo Circus (1962), Water for Elephants (2011), and Big Fish (2003). Bangladesh has a very long history of the traditional circus. Once it was very popular for entertaining different levels of people. At least 80-100 people work in a big circus team. Many of them are involved in circus from their childhood. At present, the circus team cannot earn money as they got before because of ongoing satellite culture. Sometimes the owner sacrifices money to run his circus team. As a whole, the circus tradition is now under threat. It will not survive if no proper initiatives have been taken by the government (Abir Abdullah). Chinese latim balance, fire dance, and roller skating on the table are among the most enjoyable acts by the Rowshan Circus of Bangladesh (Circus in the City, Daily Star, 2011). The objective of this study is to observe the animal update of 'The Great Rowshan Circus' of Bangladesh.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Rowshan Circus of Bangladesh

This circus is performing their acts all the year round except any religious festival. Circus team is like nomads; they are performing with their family day after day with all troops.

2.2. Domestic, pet, and Wild Animals

From the poachers, illegal wildlife traders, snake charmers, and gypsies are involved with supplying of the animals in circus team. They catch wild animals and sell with very few amount of money. Domestic animals like horse are available in any market of Bangladesh. Asian Elephant has been hired from Sylhet at the rate of 3000 taka daily.

2.3. Animal Trainer

An animal trainer named ‘Amar Pandey’ is engaged with the animals. When training comes, animals are just frightened by the trainer for using whip and hook. Some animal attack mainly bite of bear was common for the animal trainer. Bear, monkey, and dogs are vaccinated here.

3. RESULTS

Table1. Behaviour of circus animals

Animals	Behaviour
Domestic Horse	Biting, threat kick
Asian Elephant	Sleep only 2-3 hours, spend most the time for food, brain is more ridged so elephants are brilliant, it attacks for mistreating
Rhesus monkey	IQ is more than 174, it takes upto 45 kg load, carries bacterium and virus, bite creates rabies
Japanese Spitz	For pet, this is docile
Asian Black Bear	Apex predator, national animals of Finland, intelligent animal, good smell power, show carnivoral lethargy, can sleep for a long time

Table2. Showing the status of the circus animals

English name	Scientific name	Collected from	Age and sex	Cage size (LxWxH)	Bangladesh status	Global status	Distribution
Domestic Horse	-	Buy from market, Bangladesh	1 year, female	Open	-	D/P	AC
Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i> L. 1758	Hired from Sylhet, Bangladesh	40 years, male	Open	CR	EN	MEF
Rhesus Monkey	<i>Macaca mulatta</i> Zimmermann 1780	Buy from a monkey charmer of Dinajpur, Bangladesh	4 years, female	6'x4'x4'	VU	LC	
Japanese Spitz	-	Collected from Nepal	13 years, male-female	5'x4'x4', 2'x4'x2'	-	D/P	W
Asian Black Bear	<i>Ursus thibetanus</i> G. Couvier 1823	Imported from India	11 years, male	6'x4'x4'	CR	VU	MEF

Red Data Book, IUCN Bangladesh (2015); D/P=Domestic/Pet; AC=Asian Countries; EN=Endangered; W=Widely distributed; MEF=Mixed Evergreen Forest; VU=Vulnerable; LC=Least Concern; CR=Critically Endangered

Table3. Food serving chart by the animal trainer

Animals	Amount of food (daily)	Feeding time
Domestic Horse	Gram, Wheat, rice husk=5 kg	2 pm, 8 pm, 12 pm
Asian Elephant	Rice, wheat, Husk=not maintained, Banana tree 20-25 pieces	From noon to afternoon
Rhesus Monkey	Rice, Milk, Banana=0.5 kg	9 am, 1 pm, 12 pm
Japanese Spitz	Rice, Fish, Meat, Milk=2 kg	9 am, 1 pm, 12 pm
Asian Black Bear	Rice, Milk, Bread, Honey=6 kg	12 am, 12 pm

4. DISCUSSION

Human being dominates all living creatures in this world that directly influence others (Coe, 1999). Ancient movies on circus actually focused the condition of animals. World greatest animal trainer ‘Melvin Koontz’ who was a lion trainer and ‘Axel Gautier’ was an elephant trainer and he died by his

elephant in Florida in the year 1993, 5 May (incident(s), Lawsuit filed). A report showed that from 1978 to 2001 most of the circus animal incidents were happened in Florida and New York, then California and Moscow. Only 2 incidents were recorded in England and Pennsylvania of the total incidents during performing the circus or handling of the animals to people and 6 animal trainers killed by elephants, 3 bit by bear, 16 injured, 3 animal attacked were observed. On the other hand, this report suggested that 8 elephants, 2 bears, 1 Arabian horse, and 1 donkey were killed by police due to threatened for human life in circus time (updated news, 2001). Both Asian and African Elephants are legally banned by CITES in 1990 (updated March, 2001). From an another report, most elephant attacks were found in USA, Florida (10) and less (1) in India and Bangladesh during the year from 1950 to 2005, where 18 people killed by elephant, 15 elephants killed by people for attacking to people, 1 lion killed due to elephants attack, 4 complete attacks, and 26 people were injured during performing in circus (Incident(s), lawsuit filed). Issac A. Van Amburgh entered a cage with several big cats in 1833, and is generally considered first wild animal trainer in American Circus history. Mabel Stark was a famous female tiger-tamer.

5. CONCLUSION

In circus team, the animals are tortured all day long especially in their training session. They are forced to do something by whipping and hooking. These acts are completely disobeyed the animal rights of the world. We should show love to animals and stop cruelty (Kabir, 2016). This article suggests that most of the animal attacks were happened by elephant, bear, horse, and donkey. We should not irritate these animals when they take rest or during playing. Through better understanding (behaviour) about these animals, we can overcome such attacks. Newly renewed 'The Wildlife Act of Bangladesh' does not allow the use of wild animals in circus or any other purposes. Ferocious animals are naturally dangerous and totally prohibited in circus. On the basis of public demand or for different testament, we can use only domestic and pet animals in circus.

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