



## ANIMAL WELFARE BOARD OF INDIA

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Govt. of India  
(Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying)  
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No.1-9/2023-24/AGM

Date: 22.12.2023

To

The Secretary  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,  
Govt. of India,  
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
Jorbagh Road, New Delhi - 110003

**Subject: Removal of the rhesus macaque from the Schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 – regarding.**

Sir/Madam,

I am writing to bring to your attention the concerns about the welfare of the rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) following its removal from the Schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 through the amendment in December 2022, with enforcement effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The Animal Welfare Board of India has been inundated with numerous queries expressing apprehension about the potential cruelty faced by this species.

2. In this regard, it is submitted that, prior to the 2022 amendment, the rhesus macaque enjoyed protection under Schedule II, Part-I of the WPA. Given that the protection of wildlife falls within the Concurrent List of the Constitution of India, both Union and State governments shared the responsibility for safeguarding this species.

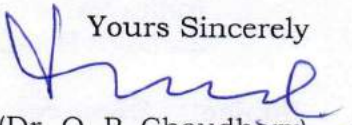
3. It is pertinent to highlight that there is persistent conflicts amongst humans and rhesus macaques across various regions of India. The predominant species involved in these conflicts are the rhesus macaque. The root causes of this conflict include the encroachment of their habitats by humans, urbanization leading to the displacement of their population, individuals feeding them due to religious beliefs and compassionate reasons, and instances of rhesus macaques raiding homes, shops, and damaging crops in search of food. Regrettably, these conflicts often result in physical and psychological harm to the rhesus macaques, including direct attacks causing severe injuries or death, utilization of lethal methods such as poisoning or cruel traps, and eviction of the species from conflict areas. The process of capturing and relocating rhesus macaques can be stressful, causing injuries, trauma, and disruption of social groups, ultimately compromising their overall welfare. Also, It is crucial to note that prior to the 2022 amendment, the WPA served as a deterrent against potential harm to the rhesus macaque in human-monkey conflict situations. The removal of the species from the Schedules has led to a surge in complaints regarding widespread cruelty inflicted upon them.

4. Further, it is stated that Section 12(b) of the WPA prohibits the use of any wild animals for scientific research without the written direction of the Chief Wildlife Warden. The Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) of the Government of India prohibits the export of any wild animal protected under the WPA. However, a memorandum issued by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau on 11 May 2022 indicates a growing demand for

monkeys for experimentation by foreign laboratories. Without the protection conferred by the WPA and FTP, there is an imminent threat of the rhesus macaque being captured, smuggled, and exploited for experimentation purposes. It is crucial to emphasize that experimentation on monkeys in India is highly regulated by the Committee for Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying.

5. Therefore, I respectfully request that necessary amendments be proposed to the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, with the aim of reinstating the rhesus macaque in Schedule II. This reinstatement is essential to ensure the protection of this species as a wild animal and to prevent any further infliction of cruelty upon them.

Yours Sincerely



(Dr. O. P. Chaudhary)  
Chairman

Copy to:

1. The Secretary, AWBI for kind information.