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Title: Need to encourage circus industry by treating it at par with the field of sports and the entertainment industry.

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY (CANNANORE): Sir, Kannur in Kerala, the Constituency I represent, is considered the cradle of Indian circus industry.

Circus is a harmonious blend of both sports and entertainment - sports in terms of acrobatic skills circus artistes demonstrate live before the audience, and entertainment far cleaner than those offered by radio and TV for the whole family from elders to children. Yet this industry is left to fend for itself and is moving towards extinction for various reasons.

State patronage is lacking unlike in Russia and China. Circus training academies and institutes operate in these countries under the Government patronage. Young circus artistes commence their training to acquire skills perfected over long years of rigorous exercises and drill. Child labour laws in India discourage engagement of children by circus industry for training and performance. This has to be changed.

Since circus involves taming and training of animals over long periods, Indian Wildlife Act provisions have turned out to be too stringent for circus industry considering the fact it gives the animals care and protection in more measure than while they are in the wild.

I urge upon the Government to encourage the circus industry by giving it a status at par with sports and entertainment.