

Extent of Human-Monkey Conflict (*Macaca sinica*) at the Hilda Obeysekera Hall, University of Peradeniya

K.M.G.W.C.P.B. Abeyratne¹, H.E.M.K. Bandaranayake¹, U.H.S. Lakmal¹,
N.M. Abeyrathne¹, A. Pinidiya², A.W. Dikkumbura¹, A. Dangolla^{1*}

¹*Department of Veterinary Clinical Science, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, 20400, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Wildlife Conservation, Battaramulla, 10120, Sri Lanka*
**adangolla@gmail.com*

Toque monkeys (*Macaca sinica*) are non-human primates which are endemic to Sri Lanka and cause conflicts with humans. Human-monkey conflict is one of the most concerned environmental problems in all communities. This study was done on the impact of monkeys on the lives of students who reside at Hilda Obeysekera Hall, University of Peradeniya. The human monkey conflict (HMC) was studied at Hilda Obeysekera Hall, a hall of residence for female students at the University of Peradeniya, using 150 questionnaires distributed to residential students (n=130) and workers (n=20). Out of the 112 responses, 106(94.6%) were students while 6(5.4%) were academic and non-academic workers. According to results, toque monkeys were not seen after late evening. Ninety six percent (96%: 106/110) trust that monkeys come in search of food, are not scared of humans (85%: 96/110). About 80% (89/110) claimed that monkeys cause damage to clothes and university property. About 68% (75/110) could not study and (47%: 52/110) experienced mental agony. Most (83%: 93/111) indicated that such monkeys are aggressive and even come into rooms (36%: 40/111). Some (35%: 39/111), believe that they attack only in response to provocation while most (42%: 47/111) indicated that the attacks were unprovoked. Most (64%:84/131) indicated that monkeys come in troupes of 6-10 or 10-15 in each. Rarely, troupes can be 16-20 (17.5%:23/131) or even more (13%:17/131). The line of trees along Mahaweli river (51%:56/109) is the commonest route of entry into hostel while the open-air theatre (28%:31/109) and *Sangamittha Hall* (22%: 24/109) were also being used. Monkeys were mostly observed near garbage collecting rooms (84%: 92/109). Occasionally, they were seen (89%: 97/109) on the balconies between wings and near the canteen (11%: 12/109). Respondents (73%) did not know where monkeys spent their nights. However, 20% of them believe that they stay away from hostel at night. Only 13% indicated that proper garbage collection and disposal could reduce the problem. A majority (44%) suggested to catch and relocate monkeys and 10% indicated that they must be captured and sterilized before releasing. Cutting down trees and construction of iron grills also were indicated by less than 10%.

Keywords: Catch and relocate, Human monkey conflict, Surgically sterilize, Toque monkeys