



## Unmanaged Translocation of monkeys could have adverse effects on wildlife, study

By Jabez John Anand, SimpliCity

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**Coimbatore :** At a time when different species of monkeys are being constantly translocated from urban areas to forested landscapes to control human-macaque conflict all over the country, a study carried out by researchers has revealed that such translocations could be lethal as the primates are bound to carry gastrointestinal parasites transmitted from humans.

Though the effects of such parasites have not been studied in detail so far, the study that was done by the department of Zoology of Bharathiyar University with expertise from the Department of Conservation Biology from the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) has strictly recommended the screening of the monkeys that are captured before being trans-located.





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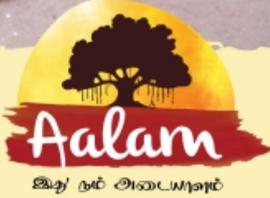
Event By 

**Pallanguzhi**

**EVENT DETAILS**

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According to the study, of the 22 known primate species that live in India, four species

including the Bonnet Macaque (*macaca radiata*), Rhesus Macaque (*macaca mulatta*), Long-Tailed Macaque (*macaca fascicularis*) and Hanuman Langur (*semnopithicus* sp.) have adopted to living close to human habitations of which the Bonnet Macaque and Rhesus Macaque often come in conflict with humans.

For long, humans have used translocation as a method of reducing the conflict. According to a data, of the 25 known trans-locations that happened between 1988 and 2017, 24 of them involved the trans-locations of these primates with the bonnet macaques topping the list with 13 incidents.

However, the team has identified that while translocation, not following some basic procedures could result in the transmission of parasites that the macaques could carry.

The team selected 20 spots in South India where the bonnet macaques live close to human habitations. Eight of these spots were in Tamil Nadu with areas including Valparai, Mettupalayam, Ooty and Attakatti being some of them.



According to Arijit Pal, one of the researchers involved, they selected different groups for the study in order to understand the prevalence of parasites. Of the different groups of macaques that lived in different locations like different forest types, urban areas and different altitudes.

They had collected the fecal samples of the macaques and screened them to ascertain the load and found that macaques that live in an urbanised environment are prone to being affected by the airborne diseases.

Urban areas included roadsides, temples and tourist spots where macaques live in large scale feeding on junk food. In these macaques, the females and young macaques are more prone to getting affected as always live within the group. The males however, had less chances of interacting with the group and had avoided being affected.

According to Palanisamy Sundararaj from Bharathiyar University who involved in the research, it is like spreading the disease by ourselves when we relocate such macaques to forested landscapes.

The team had also suggested that before being trans-located, it was important that the animals are screened for parasites and if possible treated. However, more than 40 per cent of trans-locations are handled by common people other than the forest department and screening is done in neither of them.



“This can lead to unexpected impacts on populations of sensitive species in the wild and is a management concern. Since the prevalence of endoparasites persists throughout the year, and that groups are exposed to human-dominated landscapes, especially urban and temple groups, trans-located animals are likely to carry high endoparasite loads,” the study suggests.

The team has also given suggestions for screening where they have suggested the capture of the entire group and screened for endoparasite and other diseases.

“They should be treated if they are infected with any endoparasites and, until the

animals are free of any infection, they have to be properly maintained by providing food and medical treatment. Once the animals are free of infection, the entire groups should be released at appropriate locations," the study states.

The team also has suggested against the releasing of such animals to deep forests to avoid transmission of parasites.

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