



An Impact of Monkey Menace in A Tertiary Care Teaching Hospital Setting A Case study

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ABSTRACT Monkeys are the second largest population in primates, after humans. The deforestation has led to destruction of natural habitat. As a result, monkeys turn to villages and cities in search of food and shelter. Experts say the reason the population of monkeys has multiplied after their natural habitat was destroyed is because of their ability to adapt to new habitats. The menace created by monkeys has effected even major tertiary care reaching hospitals. The following is a case study of one such instance of menace which has taken place in the hospital.

KEYWORDS : Monkey menace, Root Cause Analysis, Hospital

INTRODUCTION

Monkeys are the second largest population in primates, after humans. The deforestation has led to destruction of natural habitat. As a result, monkeys turn to villages and cities in search of food and shelter. Experts say the reason the population of monkeys has multiplied after their natural habitat was destroyed is because of their ability to adapt to new habitats.

Human settlements provide monkeys easy access to food. As a result, the time they spent in the wild finding food is now being spent in procreation. There is a population explosion. Monkeys start stealing from humans. The onslaught by humans makes them more aggressive, increasing human monkey conflicts.

According to the Primate Research Centre, Jodhpur, which is one of the three Union government run institutes on primates, more than 1,000 cases of monkey bites are reported every day in Indian cities. Almost all cities with high monkey population have abundant stories of monkeys "encroaching and destroying" property and "robbing" people.

Besides dozens of incidents of minor injuries, three cases of monkey attacks in the recent past have been alarming, including one about a month back in Aminabad, Lucknow in which a 27 year old man died. In large Institute like SGPGIMS with huge reserve forest area, the monkeys have been encroaching into the patient care areas in search of food. Patients and attendants also feed monkeys due to the religious beliefs. This has led monkeys to settle in the hospital area due to easy availability of food. The problems created by monkeys were faced by institute like AIIMS also. In 2014, Monkeys damaged emergency oxygen storage tank in AIIMS causing panic.

The Hospital administration at SGPGIMS has taken many steps to control the rampage by monkeys. In spite of all the steps taken, an incident of monkey menace has taken place in the Institute which has been studied with objectives to identify the underlying cause and impact in regards to loss of bed days or financial loss.

INCIDENT

Monkeys vandalised patient care area i.e. two private rooms of a ward on 11th March, 2017 during the night time when the rooms were vacant as the patients were discharged. The incident came to light only after opening the room for cleaning purpose in the next morning. The house keeping supervisor was informed by the house keeping staff. The incident was informed to the Medical Superintendent.

ACTION TAKEN

The site inspection was done by Medical Superintendent with a team of civil, electrical, mechanical, telecom and AC Engineers for preliminary assessment of impact on patient care.

FINDINGS OF SITE INSPECTION

The extent of damage was huge as noted onsite inspection. It was noted that monkeys damaged False ceiling, Mattresses, Television (T.V.) Remote, Air-conditioning pipes, Sofa, Wiring and Telephone etc.

Orders were passed to complete the repairs and make the rooms available for patient care as soon as possible.

The repair of rooms were carried out for a period of 3 days during which rooms were not available for patient care.

Assessment of Loss:

a. Intangible Loss:

The intangible loss was incurred as two patients were deferred admission for a period of 3 days due to non-availability of rooms and patients suffered. There was loss of 6 bed days.

b. Tangible Loss:

1. Financial Loss:

The expenses incurred in the repairs of damaged structure of rooms were obtained from the respective engineering departments which are as shown in the table 1.

Table 1. Expenses Incurred for Repairs

Department	Total Expense Incurred in Rs.
1.Civil	9,816/-
2.Electrical	4,757/-
3.Mechanical	5,515/-
4.Air conditioner	6,576/-
5.Telecom	2,000/-
TOTAL	Rs. 28,664/-

The total expense incurred for repair of two rooms was found to be Rs. 28,664/-

2. Hospital Charges Loss:

There was loss of Room charges also due non-occupancy of the two rooms for three days

Hospital Charges	Amount per day per room in Rs.
1.Admission charges	100/-
2.Private room charges	1,500/-
TOTAL	1,600/-
For two rooms	1600x2= Rs. 3,200/-
For three days(for two room)	3,200x3=Rs.9,600/-

The loss incurred by hospital through non-occupancy of rooms is Rs. 9600/- for three days.

Therefore, the total loss incurred by the institute was Rs. 38,264/- (Rs.28,664+ Rs. 9,600/-)

Root Cause Analysis:

A root cause analysis of the situation was done by a team to note the cause for the incident. On analysis, it was found that the point of entry into the vandalized rooms was through the tunnel which was meant for maintenance works. The tunnel door was left open as staff member did not lock it after the work. The monkeys have entered through this door. The incident also took place during the night time, during which monkeys gather in groups and go in search of place to stay for the night. The open tunnel door became their entry point for the curious monkeys to explore the place.

STEPS ALREADY TAKEN BY HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION

The Hospital administration has taken steps to control monkeys in the institute.

- A licensed organization which was providing services to scare monkeys using langoors was deployed in the Institute. The services are being used in the institute during day time. The amount spent for this is around Rs. 29,616/- per month.
- “Do not feed monkeys” posters have been placed in most of the patient care areas.
- The tunnel which has become the point of entry for monkeys was compartmentalized to prevent monkeys from entering the ward areas. Despite this the monkeys entered as the door was unlocked.

STEPS TO PREVENT RECURRENCE

a. Immediate Steps:

- The Hospital Administration made it mandatory for the staff to close the tunnel doors after the work is completed.
- The Security guard will check from outside the wall as to any means is left behind that monkeys can use for climbing into the building.

SUGGESTED LONG TERM CONTROL TECHNIQUES WOULD INCLUDE

1. Sterilization:

The sterilization of monkeys was practiced by municipal bodies in some places, but it did not give good results. It was difficult to catch the monkeys. The sterilization is effective in controlling the population but the existing monkeys cannot be handled. As same method for catching cannot be applied twice at the same place as monkeys are good observers. It is also difficult to recognize monkeys which are sterilized. Same monkeys were being caught many times. Dyeing the sterilized monkeys for identification also failed as the monkeys are active and the dye is lost.

So, it was concluded that sterilization is not feasible.

2. Langoors:

The langoors are used to scare monkeys in the institute. The incidents are taking place during the night time and it's difficult to use langoors during night.

3. High Power Ultrasonic Monkey Repeller:

High power ultrasonic repellers usually have a effective coverage of 1000 square feet. These can be used at the point of entry.

4. Ultra-sonic guns:

Ultra-sonic guns to scare monkeys can be used by security guards. The various options were considered and it was decided to purchase ultrasonic repellers and guns on pilot basis. If these give positive results, they will be used in all the patient care areas.

CONCLUSION

The issue of monkey menace might seem trivial but the loss caused to the institute was great both in terms of finances and patient care. So, the issue cannot be ignored by the hospitals.

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