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KARNATAKA: FARMERS USE LASERS TO SCARE MONKEYS AWAY

Bangalore Mirror Bureau | Updated: Aug 21, 2017, 04.00 AM IST



More than droughts or diseases affecting plantations, the biggest challenge for the farmers is to protect their farms from monkeys. Monkeys that visit the farms in a group of 15-20 destroy almost 50 per cent of the produce.

For several years, farmers have been searching hard for a way to keep monkeys away and often ended up getting only temporary relief. From bursting crackers to playing loud music to even experimenting with guns made from PVC pipes, farmers in the coastal belt have tried everything to no avail. Some have now started using laser pointers and claim that it is very effective.

Shivasubrahmanya Pelthadka, an organic farmer, said, “We have experimented with almost everything to get rid of monkeys. People in the village have been talking about using laser pointers for quite some time and, about two months ago, I decided to buy one. This has come as a big relief at least for the time being. A friend claimed that he has been using this for the past one year. We believe

that monkeys get irritated when the laser pointer is flashed towards them and they run away.”

Most of the farmers are procuring these laser pointers from online stores and each costs about Rs 1,000 and comes with a rechargeable battery.

Monkeys have been destroying cocoa, tender coconut, plantain, papaya and areca crops.

Farmers said that it was very difficult for them to monitor the movement of monkeys round the clock. The monkeys would enter when nobody is around, liSHARE
during lunch hours. They do not care for women and, in fact, attack them. On an average, out of 1,000 coconuts, there have been days when the monkeys
have destroyed 500 or even more.

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