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SDMC has just 2 staff to catch, shift monkeys

Its two humans against hundreds of monkeys in South Delhi, with the local civic body relying on a couple of monkey-catchers to round up and relocate the simian population.

The South Delhi Municipal Corporation has just two people employed as monkey-catchers and zero vehicles dedicated for the job, a senior Veterinary Department official said. A total of 371 monkeys were caught by the civic body between April and November 2014, the official added. The monkeys were relocated to the forests of the Asola Bhatti mines.

Office-bearers in the BJP-led Corporation had said the streets of South Delhi would be cleared of stray animals before the visit of U.S. President Barack Obama. He will be travelling through SDMC area on his way from the airport to a hotel in Central Delhi.

Leader of the House Radhey Shyam Sharma had ordered

officials to make sure that stray animals were off the streets before Mr. Obama's visit for Republic Day. However, officials are saying that the civic body's cattle vans are not adequate to catch all the stray cows, dogs and monkeys.

SDMC Leader of the Opposition Farhad Suri said: "Just because the U.S. President is visiting, the civic body went into overdrive and announced that it will move all the strays. But, there are only two monkey-catchers."

The other municipal corporations do not fare better in the monkey-catching business. The North Delhi Municipal Corporation has three monkey-catchers and it caught 254 monkeys from April to October last year.