

האגודה הישראלית נגד ניסויים בבעלי-חיים (ע"ר)
The Israeli Society for the Abolition of Vivisection (ISAV)
עמותה מס. 580052439 ת.ד. 519, גבעתיים 53104 טל. 03-6359014

P.O. Box 519, Givatayim 53104, Israel Tel. 03-6359014 www.isav.org.il ,e-mail: tsameret@isav.org.il



The Israeli Society for the Abolition of Vivisection

Shut Down Mazor Farm

Campaign Information

*The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged
by the way its animals are treated.*

- Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

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Prologue

Located in central Israel, the BFC ("Mazor") farm breeds macaque monkeys and exports hundreds of their young to experimentation laboratories in the UK every year.

The farm, which exists for over 12 years and is the only one of its kind in Israel, has single-handedly turned Israel into the world's 3rd largest exporter of macaque monkeys to UK laboratories, according to a report published by the RSPCA in 2001. Commercial trade in primates is officially strictly forbidden by the Israeli CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) Authority, the Nature and Parks Authority. In January 2000, the Nature and Parks Authority notified the CITES secretariat in Switzerland that Israel does not permit imports and exports of primates, except in rare cases such as rehabilitation projects. And yet, the BFC farm in Mazor continues to export monkeys for experiments, mainly in the UK.

According to the RSPCA report, between 1996 and 2000 the farm exported to Britain only first-generation monkeys, i.e., monkeys whose parents have been caught in the wild. According to another report, by the National Veterinarian Services in Israel, the Mazor Farm imported 38 monkeys to Israel in 2001.

Following intensive campaigning for several years, by ISAV and other Israeli animal defense groups, the now-former Minister of the Environment sent an official letter to the head of the Nature and Parks Authority, in January 2003, recommending that the farm be shut down. The Minister based his official recommendation on moral and ethical arguments, on the Mazor Farm violating Israeli regulations relating to trade in first-generation monkeys, on the fact that the existence of the farm encourages more experiments on primates rather than development of alternative research methods, and on the proven lack of supervision on the farm, which results in inhumane living conditions for the hundreds of monkeys that are currently held there.

This document contains information on the Mazor Farm and on the ongoing campaign to shut it down. We encourage everyone to join ISAV in the struggle to put an end to the cruel trade in monkeys taking place in Israel.

About the Farm

For as long as man continues to be the ruthless destroyer of lower living beings, he will never know health or peace. For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed he who sows the seeds of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love.

- Pythagoras (ca. 580-520 BCE)

General Information

The BFC Primate Breeding Farm was established in Israel in 1991. Located in Moshav Mazor, the farm is commonly known as **the Mazor Farm**. The Mazor Farm is heavily guarded and secured. There is no way for outsiders to get in, look inside, take pictures, etc.

The Mazor Farm imports crab-eating (a.k.a. long-tailed) macaque monkeys (*Macaca Fascicularis*) captured in Mauritius, breeds them intensively, and sells their young to experimentation laboratories in Europe, mostly in the UK.

While in nature baby macaque monkeys remain attached to their mothers until the age of 3 years or so, Mazor Farm employees remove baby monkeys from their mothers at a much younger age, let them recover shortly from the traumatic experience, and then put them in crates and send them off to the labs abroad.

Right now, there are approximately 1,000 monkeys in the farm. Every year, the farm sells several hundred monkeys to European labs, and typically only about half a dozen to institutions in Israel. For each monkey sold, the farm owners collect \$1,500 to \$2,000 US. Even though there are no other monkey breeding farms in the country, Israel has now become the world's 3rd largest exporter of crab-eating macaque monkeys to the UK, after Mauritius and the Philippines.

Primate breeding farms operating for export purposes are a rare phenomenon in the Western world. In countries where research on monkeys is conducted, it is common for institutions to maintain a relatively small colony of primates for their own use, typically located near the actual labs. Then, local monkeys are taken from the colony to the lab before each experiment, and are returned to their family and friends after the experiment is over.

The Mazor monkeys, once separated from their families and sent off to the labs, typically spend the rest of their lives confined to small metal cages inside the labs. They never see their families again.

The Experiments

While little is known about the actual experiments performed on Mazor monkeys in the UK, the farm owners stated several times that these monkeys are used, among other things, for polio vaccine testing and for brain research.

Polio Vaccine Testing

Routine safety tests of the oral polio vaccine (OPV) involve the inoculation of live, attenuated polio virus into the central nervous system of monkeys. At least 44 monkeys are used for each vaccine batch. All monkeys are killed following an observation period. Some develop paralysis.

The contribution of monkey neurovirulence tests for vaccine safety is questionable. Despite these tests, OPV caused 144 cases of human paralysis in the USA during the period 1980-1998. In fact, since 1979, OPV is the single known cause of polio in the USA. Consequently, in January 2000, the USA stopped the routine use of OPV, and instead started using the killed polio vaccine, which is administered by injection. Unlike OPV, the killed polio vaccine is not being tested on monkeys for decades, and is considered 100% safe.

Even more bothering is the fact that there are non-primate alternatives to the monkey neurovirulence test. In November 2000, the World Health Organization (WHO) approved the use of two non-primate tests for OPV, as an alternative to the neurovirulence test in monkeys. The first alternative is a non-animal test, which is based on the finding that neurovirulence of OPV is associated with specific mutations in the virus genome. These mutations can be identified in specific genetic tests. Batches that fail the molecular test are discarded. Those that pass the test are still required, under WHO guidelines, to be tested on animals, but instead of primates, WHO allows vaccine producers to use transgenic mice bearing the polio receptor. WHO findings show that the use of these mice is at least as sensitive as use of the traditional primate neurovirulence test. Hence, since November 2000, there is no scientific justification for using monkeys in routine neurovirulence tests of the OPV.

And yet, in legal procedures in Israel, the farm owners submitted to the court a letter from a UK research institute (NIBSC) which states that as recently as 20 March 2002, this institute was still using Mazor monkeys for routine safety tests of OPV. In other words, at least some of the monkeys exported from the Mazor Farm to the UK are used for experiments for which officially endorsed alternatives exist. Such experiments, if done in Israel, would be considered illegal, and those who perform them would face a prison sentence of up to one year.

Primate-based Brain Research

A popular scientific field utilizing macaque monkeys is primate-based brain research. Even though researchers claim that this line of research might someday lead to cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease, the actual experiments are typically labeled "basic research", i.e., experiments that have no applicative goal besides expanding our general understanding of the brain. **For details on such a research, conducted on several monkeys purchased from the Mazor Farm, refer to Appendix C: The Story of Malish on page 16.**

Recent Events

Instead of remaining among the doubtful third world countries that take part in the monkey trade, it is our duty to join those enlightened countries that have stopped carrying out this cruel occupation.

*- Tzachi HaNegbi, Israeli Minister of the Environment
January, 2003*

Israel's now-former Minister of the Environment, Mr. Tzachi HaNegbi, detailed the official Ministry stance on the Mazor Farm issue in a letter sent to Israel's authority on CITES, the Nature and Parks Authority, on January 29, 2003.

According to Minister HaNegbi's letter, the Mazor Farm should be shut down.

The main points in Mr. HaNegbi's letter were as follows:

- All primates exported from the Mazor breeding farm are designated as "F" or first generation, meaning that one or both their parents were wild-caught. Therefore, the monkey breeding farm does not save wild primates, as it claimed.
- The mere existence of such farms increases the supply of primates for experimentation and hinders the useful development of non-animal methods.
- The continued granting of import and export permits to the monkey breeding farm by the Nature and Parks Authority is illegal, since the Nature and Parks Authority told CITES in 2000 that Israel does not permit trade in primates, except in exceptional cases.
- The Nature and Parks Authority is unable to effectively monitor and supervise activities at the monkey breeding farm. In fact, an official at the Nature and Parks Authority notified the Ministry of Environment that the Authority did not have enough data to identify the primates in the farm according to CITES source codes ("W" indicates wild caught, "C" indicates captive bred, "F" indicates first generation).
- Since the monkey breeding farm was established, more than a decade ago, major changes in public opinion have taken place in Israel. Today, Israelis are much more concerned about animal welfare in general, and animal research in particular. The change in public opinion necessitates changes in government agencies' policies, as well. Primates suffer when they are hunted in the wild, during shipment, and during the actual experiments performed on them. Therefore, Israel's part in the trade in primates poses serious ethical considerations.

The full text of the letter, translated into English, appears in Appendix A on page 10.

Campaign History

First it was necessary to civilize man in relation to man. Now it is necessary to civilize man in relation to nature and the animals.

- Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

The Shut Down Mazor Farm Campaign

ISAV launched the campaign against the Mazor Farm in the early 1990s. Since then, our activists have been organizing and carrying out activities such as:

1. Weekly protest rallies in front of the Mazor Farm
2. Annual events, open to the general public and featuring top artists, celebrities and politicians, dedicated to shutting down the farm
3. Distribution of background material (pamphlets, stickers, etc.) about the farm
4. Appeals to Knesset Members, Ministers and government officials, to help shut down the farm
5. Close work with journalists and reporters to inform the public about the farm
6. Campaign against El Al carrying Mazor monkeys to Europe (see below)

The El Al Campaign

Over 120 international airlines have joined a worldwide ban on carrying monkeys to experimentation labs. At present, only the following airlines still carry primates to labs:

- Air China
- JAL
- Aeroflot
- Air France
- Air Mauritius
- Air Tanzania
- AmeriJet International
- Guyana Airways
- SN Brussels Airlines (Sabena)
- CEAC
- Aero Peru
- LIAT
- El Al

El Al is Israel's national airline. As a result of public pressure generated by ISAV campaigning, El Al declared in 1999 that it will join the international ban and stop transporting monkeys from Mazor Farm to European labs. In January 2000, El Al was sued by the farm owners for breach of contract. After a preliminary hearing, the court issued a temporary injunction ordering El Al to continue carrying primates for BFC for the duration of the trial. Then, ISAV joined the lawsuit as an additional defendant besides El Al.

In mid-2002, a few days before the trial was supposed to take place, El Al suddenly announced that it had reached an out-of-court settlement with BFC, and that it will not join the international airline ban after all. BFC withdrew its claim, and El Al continues to carry primates from Mazor to European labs to this day.

Following El Al's latest decision, Over 3,000 individuals from around the world have sent letters and signed petitions saying they will not be flying with the company for as long as it continues to carry monkeys to experimentation labs.

The Stop Brain Research in Primates Campaign

“It appears that the [medical research] system has changed from one of NIH giving grants for scientific research to one of scientific research being done solely to get NIH grants.”

*- U.S. Rep. Thomas Bliley (R-VA)
Hearings on Scientific Fraud and Misconduct
April 12, 1989*

Until now, research on primates was conducted in three places in Israel: The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, The Weizmann Institute of Science, and the Israeli Institute for Biological Research (a military research facility).

Early in 2003, it was announced that two new brain research centers will open soon, both relying on animal research including research on primates. The first center is intended to operate in Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv, and the other center in Haifa University. The proximity of the Mazor breeding farm, which will gladly supply monkeys to these new centers, was undoubtedly a major incentive in deciding to use primates rather than humane, non-intrusive brain research methods.

These days, ISAV is preparing to launch a new campaign, dedicated specifically to ending the use of primates in brain research. This campaign focuses on the suffering of the animals, the lack of applicative results from the experiments in which they are being used, and the fact that humane methods for studying brain functionality are available and can be used on human volunteers with no suffering involved.

Epilogue

Our grandchildren will ask us one day: Where were you during the Holocaust of the animals? What did you do against these horrifying crimes? We won't be able to offer the same excuse for the second time, that we didn't know.

--Dr. Helmut Kaplan

The ongoing trade in the lives of sensitive young creatures, driven by the greed of several businessmen, must be abolished. The farm's owners are wealthy, influential people, well-connected with prominent members in the academy and government. They will spend a lot of money and will use all their connections to maintain and expand their cruel enterprise.

But they cannot stop the wheels of morality and justice.

THE MAZOR FARM WILL BE SHUT DOWN

The Israeli Society for the Abolition of Vivisection calls anyone who is reading this, to help in the struggle to shut down the Mazor Farm once and for all.

Please contact us:

ISAV - The Israeli Society for the Abolition of Vivisection

P.O.B. 519
Givatayim 53104
ISRAEL

Phone: +972-3-5278499

Fax: +972-3-5278492

E-mail: isav@isav.org.il



Appendix A: Letter to the Nature and Parks Authority

This letter¹ was sent from the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Tzachi HaNegbi, to the head of the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority, in charge of granting trade and export licenses to the Mazor Farm, on January 2003.

To: Mr. Uri Baidaz
Jerusalem, 29 January 2003
The Nature and Parks Authority

Dear Uri,

Re: the Mazor Farm

I would like to bring to your attention my policy and the policy of my Ministry concerning the farm, as part of my responsibilities concerning the Israeli wildlife protection law, and as the Minister responsible for wildlife protection, including trade in wildlife.

Background

1. The Mazor Farm (BFC) is a breeding facility for long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*).
2. The monkeys are imported from Mauritius, and are intended for export to Europe (mainly to England), for medical research. Since monkeys are protected animals under the Israeli Wildlife Protection Law of 1955 (and also under appendix II of CITES), import, holding and export of primates require trade permits under the Israeli Wildlife Protection Law (clause 8) and regulations.

Policy of the Nature and Parks Authority concerning trade in monkeys

3. Legally, the Minister of the Environment is responsible for the Wildlife Protection Law. He may grant permits (clauses 8 and 9), and he may transfer these authorities to the Director of the Nature and Parks Authority (clause 15). Until 1995, these authorities were under the Minister of Agriculture, but these were given to the Minister of Environment by a government decision in 1995.
4. Today, the Director of the Nature and Parks Authority is the one responsible for granting permits. Trade in wildlife, including monkeys, requires a written permit from the Director, who has broad discretion with respect to trade permits. Under the wildlife law, the Director "may refuse to give permits,

¹ Source: CHAI Online (<http://www.chai-online.org/mazor.htm>)

give them under restrictions or conditions, cancel permits, or change them at any time".

5. On 31 January 2000, the state of Israel, through the Nature and Parks Authority, submitted to the CITES secretariat a document titled "Notification to the Parties" (the document was published on the CITES web site, <http://www.cites.org/eng/notifs/2000/003.shtml>). In this document, the state of Israel declares further restrictions on trade in wildlife, and a ban on imports and exports of monkeys, except for exceptional cases, when monkeys need to be transferred for rehabilitation and rescue centers (clause 10). This document, a formal legal document issued under CITES, presents to an international forum the policy of Israel concerning trade in wildlife.
6. In addition, the Authority prepared a Hebrew document entitled "The Policy of the Authority With Respect to Trade (import and export) of Wildlife", on 14 January 2001. This document details further restrictions ("CITES allows each party to issue regulations which are stricter than those of the convention itself. All Western countries, including North America and the EU, have much stricter rules than the convention. Recently, Israel also issued stricter regulations, by notifying the CITES secretariat on 31 January 2000"). The document states: "Israel does not allow trade in primates, except for exceptional cases, where a special permit was granted."
7. The Authority prepared yet another policy document on 14 January 2002. This document concentrates on trade in primates for experiments. In this document, the Authority concludes that the existence of a breeding farm in Israel, which would export wildlife for experiments abroad, should not be allowed.
8. To conclude, the policy of the state of Israel, as issued by the Nature and Parks Authority, and published on the web, bans trade in monkeys. To support this conclusion, we would like to point out that in 1995, the Authority rejected a request for a permit to establish a new monkey breeding farm in the Negev region (in Kibbutz Or Ha'Ner).

A report by the RSPCA: Israel is the third largest exporter of monkeys for experiments
9. The RSPCA published in 2001 a report on the suffering of primates imported into England for experiments ("Counting the Cost: Welfare implications of the acquisition and transport of non-human primates for use in research and testing"). According to the report, Israel is the third largest exporter of long-tailed macaques to England for experiments (after Mauritius and

the Philippines). Furthermore, according to the report, all the monkeys imported from Israel are designated as first generation, meaning that their parents were taken from the wild. This proves that continued harm to wildlife is being done. The RSPCA report concludes that since 1996 (the year when the designation of wildlife according to first generation, second generation, etc. was adopted), all the monkeys imported to England from Israel are first generation animals: monkeys, one or both of whose parents were taken from the wild, and therefore are not considered to be captive-bred.

10. According to the report, the continued use of first generation animals is due to commercial interests: since the availability of second generation monkeys for export lags much after the establishment of a breeding stock, breeders prefer to sell the available monkeys (first generation), rather than wait for second generation animals.
11. This means that the Mazor Farm is unable to produce a stock of monkeys for breeding. Instead, the farm continues to import wild-caught monkeys and sell first generation animals, rather than use them as a breeding stock.
12. Hence, the Mazor Farm is actually a way station for monkeys from Mauritius to England, and stopping the export from Israel to England will not prevent monkeys from being sent to experiments in England.
13. Therefore, the claim that the Mazor Farm prevents capture of monkeys in the wild is completely meaningless. The opposite is correct: this farm only increases the demand for catching individuals in the wild. So long as monkeys for experiments can be obtained at a low cost, and so long as a continuing supply exists, research institutes will have no incentives to find alternatives for animal experiments. The claim that stopping the export of monkeys from the Mazor Farm will harm medical research is without basis, since every country may import the monkeys directly from Mauritius.
14. The RSPCA report shows that most suffering is caused to the monkeys during transportation, and this is particularly true with respect to the species bred at Mazor. The report aims to bring about a ban on the import of monkeys for experiments in England, and recommends that England breed locally monkeys required for experiments.

Lack of supervision by the Nature and Parks Authority

15. In response to the findings of this report that all the monkeys exported from Israel to England are first generation animals, the Authority argues that these findings are based on incorrect information, the source of which lies in misunderstandings of the Authority and lack of supervision by the Authority. According to an Authority official, Simon Nemzov , in a letter dated 1 May 2002, "Until about half a year ago, all the monkeys from Mazor were designated under code F (indicating that one or both parents were taken from the wild)." Nemzov argues that this designation was due to a lack of understanding by the Authority as to the meaning of the different codes. "To the best of my knowledge, the Authority never inspected the farm to verify the source of the individuals included in each permit: whether they were wild-caught, first generation or second generation. To conclude, the RSPCA report is based upon incorrect information, but at present, the Authority has no information that could verify the source of the individuals who were exported from the farm in the past."

16. This indicates that the Authority does not have the resources required to supervise the farm, and therefore, the permits granted are untrue. The lack of ability of the Authority to monitor the farm has broad implications, as the Authority is the Israeli CITES Scientific Authority. We must bear in mind that this is one of the most important environmental conventions. It appears that the Israeli Authority grants permits without checking the source of the wildlife and without supervision.

17. To truly implement the convention, the Authority must routinely monitor the farm and verify that no violations of permits, and also no violations of the wildlife protection law and the animal welfare law are taking place. These are not implemented today. If the Authority cannot allocate the personnel and resources necessary to fully monitor the farm, then the activities of the farm – and not just the export – cannot be permitted.

Hunting monkeys in the wild

18. Even those who agree that the existence of the Mazor Farm does not prevent catching monkeys in the wild argue that such hunting does not harm nature, since the monkeys are considered aliens in Mauritius. This argument is irrelevant. The fact that a large population of this species still exists in Mauritius proves that capture of monkeys in the wild does not significantly reduce the wild population. Therefore, looking at nature protection alone, there is no justification to continue catching the monkeys. On the other hand, the monkey breeders have no interest in fully destroying the monkey population in Mauritius: From their point of view, it is best that a supply of wild monkeys always be available.

19. Years of wild capture, for both breeding and research, not only did not solve the monkey problem in Mauritius, but also raises serious ethical questions. The status of monkeys as aliens is irrelevant with respect to the export for experiments. Even if the species is regarded as alien with respect to nature protection considerations, this cannot undermine considerations of preventing individual suffering. By granting trade permits for the Mazor Farm, the Authority ignores the suffering imposed on monkeys during their capture, their holding in the farm, their transport in boxes, and finally – the torture caused to them during actual experiments.

Conclusion

20. (this repeats the above).

The professional policy of my Ministry is also my own. The strong public objection to the Mazor Farm shows how central the issue is in public opinion in Israel at the present. It is my duty, as the Minister in charge of the Nature and Parks Authority, to take a moral and ethical stance on this issue.

The policy regarding monkey trade, as any other field, changes according to the development of science and the emergence of new social norms. In the last decade, a major change in public opinion on animal welfare in general, and animal experiments in particular, has taken place in Israel. The National policy must adjust itself to the moral stance and public norms, rather than to the narrow commercial interest of a few individuals. Instead of remaining among the doubtful third world countries that take part in the monkey trade, it is our duty to join those enlightened countries that have stopped carrying out this cruel occupation.

Sincerely,

**Tzachi HaNegbi,
Minister of the Environment**

UPDATE: Response from the primate farm² (February, 2003).

Dr. Bushmitz, owner of the Mazor monkey breeding farm, claimed on Israeli radio that the RSPCA report on which Israel's Environment Minister based his decision requesting that the permit for the farm be revoked was filled with mistakes that the report's author assured him would soon be corrected. However, when CHAI contacted the report's author, Dr. Mark Prescott, Senior Scientific Office, Research Animals Department for the RSPCA, Dr. Prescott stated that while he did speak with Dr. Bushmitz, the subject of alleged mistakes in his report was never raised. He affirmed that there are no mistakes in the report of which he is aware and it stands as written. Dr. Prescott said it is a common tactic of vivisectionists to defend themselves by claiming mistakes were made in reports evaluating their activities.

² Source: CHAI Online, <http://www.chai-online.org/mazor.htm>

Appendix B: BFC Company Information

The BFC breeding farm is a private business, and very little information is known about its business structure.

The main Israeli shareholders are:

1. Dr. Moshe Bushmitz, General Manager, also Chief Veterinarian of Hod Hasharon municipality.
2. Mr. Eli Holtzman, also CEO of 'Internet Zahav' (NASDAQ: IGLD), a major Internet Service Provider in Israel.
3. Mr. Ze'ev Brin, owner of the property in Moshav Mazor.

A foreign businessman, Mr. Owen Griffiths, was a director in BFC. An Australian in origin, Mr. Griffiths is also co-owner of Bioculture Mauritius, a major supplier of wild-caught and captive-bred crab-eating macaques for research labs in America and Europe.

BFC contact information:

BFC Breeding Farm
P.O.Box 84
Mazor 73160
Israel
Phone: +972-3-9331512
FAX: +972-3-9369221
E-mail: bfc@inter.net.il

Appendix C: The Story of Malish

Malish is a young macaque monkey. He was born in Mazor Farm, sold to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem's brain research center in early 2000, and was used in a long set of experiments until late in 2002, along with three other monkeys from Mazor. These experiments have been exposed by an ISAV activist who worked undercover in the University's lab for several months, and used a concealed video camera to document what the monkeys were going through.

During the experiments, Malish and his friends were required to identify randomly changing shapes on a computer screen. While they were doing that, computer software was supposed to record their brain activity, which was monitored by electrodes that had been inserted into their brains.

For the experiments, the following steps were taken:

- The monkeys were trained, for about a year, to perform the task required by the experiments.
- Then, each monkey underwent intrusive head surgery. A part of their skulls was removed, and a "chamber" installed in its place to allow the insertion of electrodes into their brains.
- Before each experiment, the monkeys were deprived of water for periods of up to 20 hours. Then, during the experiments, whenever a monkey identified the correct image, he was given a few drops of sweet juice as a reward.
- Throughout each session, the monkeys were fully immobilized by a "monkey chair" - a restraining device that prevented them from moving their limbs.

Among the conclusions from that research, was the fact that monkeys "learn to categorize abstract images by their ordinal number in the list."³ Another conclusion was that "Further experiments are needed to determine the length of a sequence which may be represented in this way."⁴ This second conclusion may have led to the fact that at present, six other monkeys, also bought from the Mazor Farm, are being used by the Hebrew University in a similar set of experiments.

The following text is an English translation of a news article that appeared on one of Israel's leading news web sites after the experiment had been exposed:

Sunday, November 17th, 2001 **Walla Israeli News Service**

By **Tamar Nahari** (translated from Hebrew)

A primate experiment conducted at the Hebrew University laboratories in Jerusalem, which was documented undercover, exposes some horrific pictures: in the course of the experiment, electrodes are inserted into a monkey's brain while he is fully conscious. The footage was aired today in the national television news program **Five with Oshrat Kotler** on Channel 2. The experiment took place several months ago, and its documentation with a hidden camera is considered to be one of the only full documentations of similar experiments around the world.

³ Source: http://www.fiz.huji.ac.il/~damita/Cat_pap_html/MONCATfinal.htm

⁴ Ibid.

In the footage, the researchers are seen as they are sawing the monkey's skull and inserting electrodes into the brain, for the purpose of conducting an experiment testing the memory activity in the brain. During this surgery, the monkey is conscious and blinking his eyes, while his head is locked into a restraining device. After the surgery the monkey was transferred to a cramped cage where he lived for several months, in which he was being deprived of drinking water. In order to drink, the monkey had to prove his visual memory capabilities in various experiments conducted in the months following the surgery.

The monkey seen in the footage is called **Malish**. **Malish** is a two-year-old long-tail macaque monkey who was raised in the BFC primate breeding farm on Moshav Mazor in Israel, which exports monkeys for experiments. **During the experiment, one of the researchers was recorded talking about the experiment and saying that "We did all kinds of nonsense, simply so we can do something,"** while explaining that the experiment was actually not documented properly because of a failure in the laboratories' database system.

Primate Sanctuary

Around four to eight monkeys are supposedly being held at the present time in the Hebrew University's laboratories. The monkeys, who have been through various experiments, can be rehabilitated. A primate sanctuary for retired "research" primates has been established recently in Moshav Shdema, next to Gedera (in the center of Israel), by the "Freedom to Live" society. The sanctuary could rehabilitate and care for these monkeys, but it is unlikely that the University would agree to give them to the sanctuary.

According to an estimation given by the Israeli Society for Abolition of Vivisection (ISAV), around 150 non-human primates are being held in Israeli laboratories. About a third of them were raised in primate breeding farms such as the Mazor (BFC) farm in Israel, while the rest were captured in Africa, despite being protected wild animals.

The kinds of primate experiments that Israeli laboratories are involved with mainly include organ transplant experiments and brain research. Brain research experiments, like the one documented in the Jerusalem University's laboratories, are usually conducted without the administration of painkillers or sedatives in order not to interfere with the research results.

Like **Malish**, during their stay in the laboratories, the monkeys are held in isolation, inside cramped cages that hardly allows them any movement, and are fed with sterile food porridge.

The Israeli Society for Abolition of Vivisection has been campaigning for the last several years against the Mazor primate breeding farm and against the legality and the approval of wide-ranging experiments that are conducted in various laboratories around the country on animals such as non-human primates, dogs, cats, and others. In January this year ISAV has appealed to the Israeli high court in a demand to decide on specific regulations for the conduct of animal experiments.

According to ISAV, **animal research in Israel is not accountable to any kind of supervision and allows for experiments and research procedures that are not accepted in laboratories overseas.** Recently, a petition signed by several dozen Israeli medical doctors was published that expresses objection to most experiments conducted in the country and calls for a significant reduction of animal experiments as well as increased supervision of the laboratories themselves.

Those objecting to placing limits on animal experimentation claim that such a limit would cause a major hit to science in Israel, which could result in economic damage, suspension of the scientists' work, and the loss of research that has been conducted for a long time. According to their claims, animal experiments are the first stage in the development of drugs and procedures that save lives every day.

An article published recently in the British newspaper the **Guardian** reflects an increasing trend among scientists that sheds a new light on the issue. According to the article, there is no certainty at all regarding the ability of experiments on animals to predict the experiments' outcome on the human body.

The article details a series of different experiments that were conducted on animals that resulted in the death of thousands of human beings, since various drugs that were approved through animal experiments were eventually discovered to be lethal to humans.

There is also a big question mark surrounding brain research, like the experiment documented in this article, because of the inability to make a comparison between non-human primates' brain and the human brain.



Malish, restrained in a "Monkey Chair", The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, July 2001.

Dr. Bushnitz, Mazor Farm owner and manager, frequently claims that the monkeys from his farm are used specifically for life-saving experiments. The story of Malish, representing what is done to many macaque monkeys around the world, is a classic example of an experiment that serves no actual purpose - except to assist some researchers in their famous "publish or perish" race towards academic recognition.