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With the increased human inhabitation in areas with slopes due to the increase of population, stable slopes which has stood for ages have started failing. Therefore, a proper management in construction activities within the hill country areas has become an urgent call of the day.

Since most of the hill slopes in Sri Lanka consists of residual soils and colluvium it is essential to understand their behaviour with increased precipitation under adverse geo-environmental conditions. The residual soils being naturally unsaturated during failure the stability of such soils is governed by the shear strength behaviour, piezometric effects and the cumulative rainfall.

Naturally the safe heights of earth cuts decrease with the increase of the slope angle. The existing stable earth cuts have undergone nature's rigorous conditions for a considerable period. Therefore, this of stability could be co-related with other influencing parameters such as geological, hydrological and of course of geometry of the earth cut, independent of the soil type.

In order to expose the relationship among the influencing factors a study of the existing earth cuts made for roadways and dwellings was carried out within the Municipal Council limits to Ratnapura as the study area. Out of the studies locations majority of the cases fell into the categories of earth cuttings predominantly in residual soils, earth cuttings in residual soils overlying completely weathered rock and thirdly, in earth cuttings with a predominant layer of completely or moderately weathered rock. The data available may not be adequate for any numerical co-relations but could be used in establishing hypothetical guidelines. Also considering various possibilities of failure mechanisms the critical values could be defined in terms of height of the cut, thickness of overburden deposit and the slope gradient of the cut.