



Kyasanur Forest Disease

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Why in News

Recently, **Karnataka State Government** proposed to establish a '**monkey park**' in **Malnad** region to **contain the problem of crop-raiding primates**. Environmentalists fear that this **may trigger infections like Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD)** and also upset the natural food chain.

- It is caused by **Kyasanur Forest disease Virus (KFDV)**, a member of the virus family **Flaviviridae**.
- It was **first identified in 1957** in a sick monkey from the Kyasanur Forest in Karnataka. Since then, between 400-500 humans cases per year have been reported.
- KFD is **endemic to the Indian state of Karnataka**.
- **Rodents, shrews, and monkeys** are common hosts for KFDV after being bitten by infected **Hard ticks (Haemaphysalis Spinigera)**. KFDV can cause **epizootics (outbreak of disease in animals)** with high fatality in primates.
- **Transmission:** To humans, it may occur after a **tick bite** or **contact with an infected animal** (a sick or recently dead monkey).
- **Signs and Symptoms:** After an **incubation period of 3-8 days**, the symptoms like **chills, fever, headache, severe muscle pain, vomiting, gastrointestinal symptoms and bleeding** may occur. Patients may experience **abnormally low blood pressure, and low platelet, red blood cell, and white blood cell counts**.
- **Diagnosis:** It can be diagnosed in the early stage of illness by **molecular detection by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) or virus isolation from blood**. Later, **serologic testing using enzyme-linked immunosorbent serologic assay (ELISA)** can be performed.
- **Treatment and Prevention:** There is no specific treatment for KFD although a **vaccine is available**.

Source: TH