

Kyasanur Forest Disease

Source: TH

Why in News?

Since the beginning of 2024, two individuals have lost their lives due to **Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD)**, a viral infection prevalent in Karnataka.

• The number of deaths reported due to the disease since 1956, when it was noticed in the forests of **Shivamogga district**, is above 560.

What is Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD)?

About:

- Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD), a zoonotic illness, is colloquially referred to as "monkey disease" due to its link with monkey fatalities.
- It is caused by the Kyasanur Forest disease Virus (KFDV), which primarily affects humans and monkeys.
 - It was first identified in **1957** in a sick monkey from the Kyasanur Forest in Karnataka. Since then, between 400-500 human cases per year have been reported.
 - Eventually, KFD emerged as a **grave public** health **problem** spreading through the entire **Western Ghats**.

Transmission:

- In nature, the <u>virus</u> is maintained mainly in <u>hard ticks (Haemaphysalis spinigera)</u>, monkeys, rodents, and birds.
- To humans, it may occur after a tick bite or contact with an infected animal (a sick or recently dead monkey).

Occurrence:

 Normally, the transmission **begins** from late November to June and peaks between December and March.

Symptoms:

Characterized by chills, frontal headache, body ache, and high fever for five to 12 days with a case fatality rate of 3 to 5%.

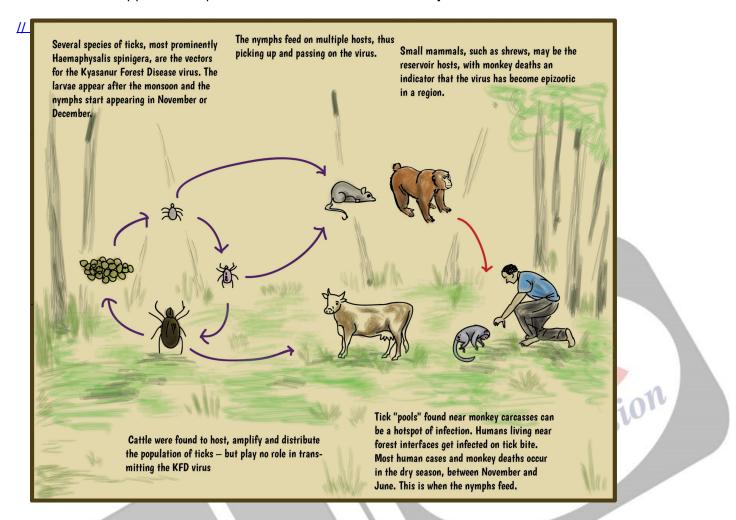
Diagnosis:

- Diagnosis can be made 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:

- Doctors manage symptoms and monitor vitals daily, in the absence of any specific treatment.
 - Patients are receiving **free treatment** as per the State Government's decision.
- A vaccine (Formalin inactivated <u>KFDV vaccine</u>) does exist for KFD and is used in endemic areas of India.
 - However, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is said to be in consultation with Indian Immunologicals for the development of a vaccine.

• The forest department is distributing (N, N-diethyl phenylacetamide) **DEPA** oil, to be applied to exposed skin which acts as a **tick repellent.**



Kyasanur Forest

- The Kyasanur Forest is a protected area located in the Shimoga district of Karnataka.
- It is part of the **Western Ghats** mountain range and is known for its rich biodiversity.
- The forest is home to a variety of plants and animals, including tigers, leopards, elephants, and gaur.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

- Q. Consider the following: (2018)
 - 1. Birds
 - 2. Dust blowing
 - 3. Rain
 - 4. Wind blowing

Which of the above spreads plant diseases?

(a) 1 and 3 only

(b) 3 and 4 only(c) 1, 2 and 4 only(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: D

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