



# Kyasanur Forest Disease

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## 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 [virus](#) is maintained mainly in [hard ticks \(Haemaphysalis spinigera\)](#), 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%**.

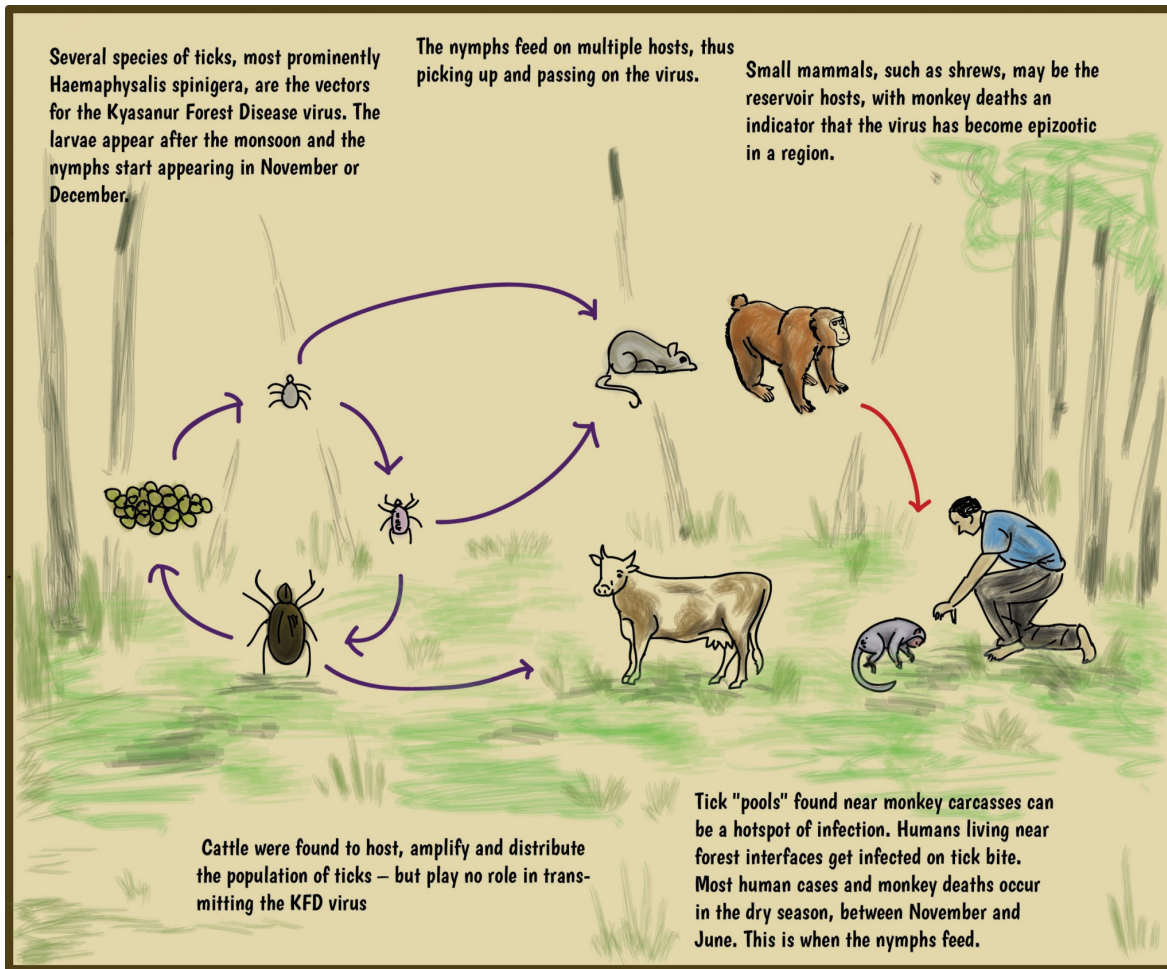
### ▪ Diagnosis:

- 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 [KFDV vaccine](#)) 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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