

8 September, 1996

Mr. Humayun Abdulali  
75 Abdul Rehman Street  
MUMBAI 400003

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

Greetings ! I hope this letter finds you in good health.

The reason for this note, as you would have noticed, is a photograph of a Blackthroated Weaver (Male) *Ploceus benghalensis*, which was taken in Hyderabad, where they are breeding !

The interesting point is that the colour of feathers in the region of the bird's cheeks, etc., (face) is white instead of the brown described and illustrated in Indian bird-literature. Only the *Fauna* (Stuart Baker) mentions that old males have white on the face.

There is a protected area close to Hyderabad, where these birds are at present breeding in large numbers (at least 3 breeding flocks). Almost all the males observed (99% ?) have similar facial coloration as visible in the photograph.

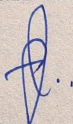
I am sending a few more pictures to Dr. Unnithan in the bird room of the BNHS.

Kindly tell us what is to be done about this. Is it an unreported plumage of this bird, or something more substantial like a sub-species ? Would a specimen be essential to ascertain these things?

We await your reply with great anxiety.

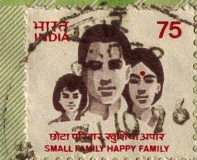
With best wishes to you and Mrs. Abdulali,

Yours sincerely



encl: one photograph of the blackthroated weaver.

अन्तर्देशीय पत्र कार्ड  
INLAND LETTER CARD



K445

Ashbeesh Pillai  
8-2-545 Prim Parwal  
Road No 7  
Banjara Hills,  
Hyderabad,  
500 034  
India

SENDER'S NAME & ADDRESS

The [Signature]  
13 Park Hill,  
Boulder,  
Colorado  
400 050

NO ENCLOSURES ALLOWED

Humayun Abdulali

2/11/96

3, New Reshma Apartment,  
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),  
Mumbai - 400 050.  
Tel. : 648 3006

23rd Oct 1996

My dear Roshesh,

It is nice and encouraging to see the amount of trouble that you are going over the identity of a Black-throated Baya - Ploceus badius. Dr Munir and I have spent a few hours last week over the specimens in Bombay and must confess that no clear reply is yet available. The first description in Jordan and the old Jans refer to the white cheeks, but these then disappeared in Stuart Baker, Ripley & Sahin Ali. The white cheeks <sup>and</sup> black line surrounding patch on the head appear to be last phase of the breeding plumage and the specimen in captivity which I hope will survive for a month or longer, should tell the whole story. Let's wait & see! You have failed to tell us whether the nests contained fresh or incubated eggs or young. Keep clear written notes associating the different stages of the building of the nest, the laying, incubation, hatching of the eggs with the color changes of the ♂. Let's wait & watch. And if you could a month you should have the whole story which should come to the BNHS. I want to a reg in Trilobites... I know nothing about the DNA arrangement but you will require specimens of both races, if they exist. But if you can get any results get them and keep us trying for more.

And Crook's paper in the first part of vol LX which you offer to have is certainly short & clearly written. Try and compare the ♂, ♀, Bldg, incubat. & other arrangements with those of the Common Baya. The differences will be more interesting than the identities. So ahead and keep us informed. Good luck & good wishes.

Awaiting your news from time to time,  
Sincerely,

Roshesh Pillai,  
8-2-545 Prem Navab,  
Road No 7, Banjara Hills,  
Hyderabad 500 034

अन्तर्वेशीय पत्र कार्ड  
INLAND LETTER CARD



Mr. Akleash Pittie,  
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SENDER'S NAME & ADDRESS

H. Abd-elli  
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NO ENCLOSURES ALLOWED

*[Faint, illegible handwritten text on the reverse side of the envelope]*

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3, Main Building, Hyderabad  
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Humayun Abdulali

3, New Reshma Apartment,  
13, Pali Hill, Bandra (W),  
Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel. : 648 3006

5/8/11  
/96

3<sup>rd</sup> December 1996

My dear Hsheesh,

P. bengalensis

I have your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> ult. in the above connection. If and when you have occasion to publish the final result of the white-check problem it will be necessary to go over all the facts and evidence. This will amount to a repetition of most of what you say and I wonder if it would be worthwhile doing this twice over - particularly when you may have a solution before the question is published. I would advise waiting - a couple of months at the worst best (?)

As regards the Newsletter, I have not seen an issue for several years and frankly don't think much of it - at least as it was some time back.

Please keep me informed of what you do. I thought I'd make a short reference to the check-color in my Catalogue, the relevant part of which is now under preparation. Your recent specimens will be included/will need remarks.

All good wishes,  
Sincerely,

Did you attend the Cambodian meeting? What was it like?

Ref: Your: Dt. 3-12-1996.

7 December, 1996

Mr. Humayun Abdulali  
3, New Reshma Apartment  
13, Pali Hill  
Bandra (W)  
MUMBAI 400050

Dear Abdulali Sahab,

Sub : *Ploceus benghalensis*

Thank you for your above referred letter and the advice therein. I think I will take it and wait for some more time before publishing anything on the 'white-cheeked' birds.

Further to the above, a couple of days ago I came across a good description of the bird in *Stray Feathers* Vol. 11 pages 270-272. Perhaps you would like to go through it. I'm glad that you are contemplating including the specimens we sent from here, in the *Catalogue*.

For your information, the *Newsletter for Birdwatchers* continues to be produced bimonthly from Bangalore. It is now printed by off-set and has a fairly large readership !

With best wishes to you and Mrs. Abdulali !

