

## VIRUS RESEARCH CENTRE

( MAINTAINED JOINTLY BY THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH  
AND THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION )

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Dear Mr. Ali:

This is in reply to your letter No.958 of June 10, regarding Dr. Pandit's questions about the possibility of bird migrations to South India.

The entire problem of animal movement, both avian and mammalian, opened by this new discovery of Kyasanur Forest Disease in Shimoga District, opens a wide vista of speculation and extensive problems requiring considerable and intensive field work, particularly in three categories :

- (1) Monkeys,
- (2) local and migrating birds, and
- (3) indigenous rodents.

This will constitute <sup>a</sup> the major effort of the VRC field teams which have already been established in the epidemic area and are making collections which will doubtless give us a better idea of the natural history of such a forest disease which apparently has a reservoir in ticks which breed mostly in non-human vertebrate fauna in the forest area.

I am departing tomorrow for a short visit to the USA and expect to be back sometime before the end of July. I look forward to the opportunity of personally discussing this problem with you in August and the possibility of practical implementation of a bird ringing scheme can be discussed. Another thing which must be done is adequate collection of birds in the area to be found at different seasons of the year. You may remember that in the original serological survey of antibodies in human-beings to various arthropod-borne viruses that the only place in India where a significant existence of antibodies to RSSE viruses was discovered was in Saurashtra and I would think it would be pertinent to bear in mind seasonal avian migration to Saurashtra Districts, particularly in regard to seasonal occurrence. I am sure that your office in which you have a collection of all birds in India will be of considerable help when this is undertaken. Meanwhile, we are communicating constantly with Dr. Pandit, as we are the field arm of the Indian Council of Medical Research dealing with this problem. I hope we can get together in August for a

detailed discussion of the problem as it relates to the possibility of birds being related to the introduction of the virus into a new area.

With personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

*Telford H. Work*

Telford H. Work, M.D.

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