

BOOK REVIEWS

NIV and the technology was transferred to the Karnataka State Government authorities many years ago. Perhaps it reflects the lack of interest of the government in the prevention of the disease.

The next three presentations deal with the immunological aspects of dengue and dengue haemorrhagic fever. They summarize the rise and fall of different cytokines and their interactions. Both cellular and humoral components on the immune system and almost all factors in clotting blood are involved in the development of haemorrhage and shock. Of a large number of dengue cases, a fraction develop haemorrhage and shock, which may prove fatal. In the studies summarized in the presentations, it was heartening to note a link between the NS-1 of the virus, complement activation and clinical manifestations of DHF. It is hoped that a user-friendly bedside test can be developed to predict the development of haemorrhagic manifestations and shock in dengue patients.

The presentations on the clinical features and management of dengue and clinical features of JE are excellent. The former gives a thorough and down-to-earth diagnosis and management of dengue and dengue haemorrhagic fever. Perusal of this presentation will help the clinicians evaluate their cases properly. The presentation on JE gives a thorough insight in the differential diagnosis.

Two presentations are related to the development of dengue vaccines and their trials. The development of dengue vaccine is beset with problems of enhanced manifestation of the disease (including haemorrhage) in patients with

pre-existing dengue antibodies. Evidences have also been provided that the specific genotype of dengue may be responsible for DHF. Many different approaches have been tried, viz. killed vaccine, attenuated virus vaccine, DNA vaccine, chimeric vaccine (chimera with 17D strain of Yellow fever with dengue), etc. Now a few biotechnological companies have entered into dengue vaccine manufacture and trial. The problem with the dengue virus is that unlike Yellow fever or KFD or TBE, it does not have a good primate model, except that of humans. It is hoped that this difficulty would be surmounted in future.

The new approach for the development of vaccine against arboviruses was epitomized in a presentation which dealt with Blue tongue virus of sheep. The author with an extensive background on the subject, has presented the analytical aspects of the virus structure, but is also acutely aware of the importance of host-virus interactions during virus trafficking between mammalian and vector cells. Perhaps the author would further add: hosts as themselves.

In conclusion, one would strongly recommend this book to the libraries of individuals or institutions concerned with public health in general and vector-borne diseases in particular. Aspiring research workers would find a wealth of information and ideas in this volume.

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Indian Astronomy – A Primer. S. Balachandra Rao (ed.). Bhavan's Gandhi Centre of Science and Human Values, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, #43/1, Race Course Road, Bangalore 560 001. 2008. 90 pp. Price: Rs 75.

Bhavan's Gandhi Centre of Science and Human Values, Bangalore in its attempt to inculcate the spirit of scientific inquiry and human values has brought out a slim book titled *Indian Astronomy – A Primer* by S. Balachandra Rao. This book is mainly intended for students of astronomy and interested readers. This book consists of four chapters which are: Introduction – Historical Survey, Zodiac and Constellation, Yuga System and Eras and Ahargana. It also has a list of various other books by the same author for further study.

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