INTRODUCTION

Paratuberculosis is a chronic, contagious, invariably fatal enteritis which can affect domestic and wild ruminants. The etiological agent, *M. avium subsp. paratuberculosis*, is an acid-fast organism formally known as *M. paratuberculosis*. Uncertainty exists regarding an association between infection with *M. avium subsp. paratuberculosis* and Cron’s disease, a chronic entritis in humans (Thompson, 1994). Cattle, sheep, goats and other wild and domestic ruminants are affected, including deer, camels and llamas. Annual death losses within an infected herd may reach 10%.

Animals are infected by ingestion of food and water contaminated by feces. The incidence of subclinical cases shedding organisms intermittently may be as high as 15%.

In cattle, there is chronic enteritis, often with severe diarrhea. The incubation period may be a year or more. Calves are susceptible but do not show signs until adult-hood. The disease is usually progressive, leading to emaciation and death. Mortality is caused in large part by the malabsorption of amino acids and the loss of protein into the intestine (protein losing enteropathy) (Tripathi *et al.*, 2002). The ileum and colon are usually involved and the infection may extend to the rectum in advanced cases. The mucus membrane becomes corrugated and thickened because of epithelioid and giant cells, both of which contain many organisms. Large numbers of organisms may be shed in the feces. (Narang and Gurpreet, 2007).

CASE HISTORY

A buffalo about 4 years of age was presented to the college clinics, having a history of chronic diarrhea for 3 months and not responding to treatment with antibiotics and other therapy. The animal was emaciated, debilitated (Figure 1) and weak showing watery art diarrhea (Figure 2).

DIAGNOSIS

Diarrheic fluid and rectal pinch smear collected and examined after staining with the acid-fast staining method. The smear revealed acid-fast bacteria morphologically resembling *M. avium subsp. paratuberculosis*.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of history, clinical symptoms and laboratory examination it was concluded that this was a case of J.D.
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REFERENCES


Figure 1. Emaciated, debilitated buffalo.

Figure 2. buffalo showing fluid diarrhea.