

## THALASSAEMIA

Thalassaemia which is often synonymously known as Mediterranean anaemia is a hereditary disorder. It occurs mainly in the Mediterranean population especially Italians, Greeks and Sicilians. It is now increasingly being recognised that the Thalassaemia belt extends far wider than Mediterranean countries and it includes West Asia, India and S-E Asia including Thailand and Indonesia. It has been reported from almost all parts of India. According to J.B. Chatterjee (1970) the Indian sub-continent is a rich reservoir of thalassaemia, and various other abnormal haemoglobins which include haemoglobin S, D, E, Hb S has been found mostly in the aboriginal tribes. Hb E was found in Nepalese, Bengalis and Assamese. Other abnormal haemoglobin that has been found in India include Hb F, H, J, K, L, and M (Chatterjee 1970). It is of great interest that Dr. Adams has found some cases of Thalassaemia in Nepal; and these as he suggest may just be 'the tip of the iceberg of thalassaemia in Nepal.' I first learned of this disorder occurring in the Nepalese about six years back from Dr. Michael Brain who has worked on this problem in the Gurkha soldiers in Far East. It is to be welcomed that somebody has started working on this problem in Nepal itself. Other haematological disorder beside hemoglobinopathies that may be found in Nepal is G-6-PD deficiency. Chatterjee (1960) has reported in two cases of G-6-PD deficiency in out of 25 Nepalese investigated in Calcutta.

- Re: 1. Chatterjee, J. B: Haematological aspects of tropical diseases: newer perspective; XI International Congress of Internal Medicine: Delhi, 1970.  
2. De Gruy: Critical Haematology in Medical Practice. London.