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**A NUCLEAR-POLYHEDROSIS VIRUS OF *DIACRISIA OBLIQUA* (WLK)
(ARCTIIDAE, LEPIDOPTERA)**

The Bihar hairy caterpillar, *Diacrisia obliqua* (Wlk.) is a polyphagous pest feeding on groundnut, sweet potato and many other cultivated crops. Battu *et al.* (1971) recorded a granulosis virus infection on this species from Punjab. The present paper reports the incidence of a nuclear polyhedrosis on *D. obliqua*. No previous record of a similar infection on this species is available.

Many larvae collected from sweet potato fields at Vellayani in 1972 showed signs and symptoms characteristic of a nuclear polyhedrosis. Haemolymph and tissue smears revealed the presence of polyhedral bodies which were negative to staining by giemsa. Pathogenicity tests proved positive.

The infected larvae exhibited loss of appetite and became sluggish in 4 to 5 days. Larval growth was retarded and they became dirty brown in colour as the disease advanced. Death occurred in 6 to 8 days. The flaccid cadavers were generally found hanging head downwards from the foliage to which they were attached by the posterior prolegs. The integument was very fragile and it often ruptured liberating the liquefied body contents. Postmortem changes occurred rapidly and the cadavers dried up to a thin scale.

REFERENCES

- Battu, G. S., Bindra, O. S. and Rangarajan, M. 1971. Investigations on microbial infections of insect pests in Punjab. *Indian J. Ent.*, **33**: 317-325.

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