

Dystocia due to dicephalus monster in a crossbred cow

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ABSTRACT

A double-headed monster fetus was delivered by caesarian section in a pluriparous crossbred (Desi x HF) pregnant cow was presented with acute labor and dystocia. Fetus was fully developed female calf with two heads joined by a single neck, two oral cavities, four eyes, two mandibles, two tongue, single esophagus, single thorax and abdomen, vulva, two fore limbs and two hind limbs which can be classified as Dicephalus Dipus Dibrachious Monster.

Key words : Dicephalus monster, crossbred cow, dystocia

Developmental abnormalities of the ovum, embryo or fetus occur in all the species of domestic animals. Double monster or conjoined twins consist of two fetuses joined together and are common in the cow and buffalo (Sane *et al.*, 1994). Embryonic duplications are due to abnormal duplication of the germinal area giving rise to fetuses whose body structures are partially but not completely duplicated (Roberts, 1971). The present report is about monster fetus with double heads in a crossbred cow.

Case History : A crossbred (Desi x HF) cow aged about four years belonging to village Sansar, Tal-Indapur, Dist. Pune (M.S.) was reported with full term pregnancy and in an acute labour. The cow had completed one lactation and the calving was reported to be normal. The cow was straining for the last five hours after the expulsion of the first water bag. Per vaginal examination revealed fully dilated cervix and live fetus in anterior longitudinal presentation and appeared to be double headed in the birth canal at the pelvic brim. The double head caused the postural problem and revealed obstruction. Manual attempts failed to deliver the fetus. Hence, the fetus was finally delivered by caesarian section under local infiltration anesthesia as per standard surgical procedure. Fetus on gross examination was fully developed with head

duplication and was alive for half an hour after surgery.

External Appearance (Fig.): The monster externally revealed fully developed female calf with duplication of head in the cranial region (Dicephalus). The Two heads were joined together in the same direction by a single neck. Both the head components were equal. It had four eyes, four ears, two muzzles, two mandibles, single thorax and abdomen, vulva two fore limbs and two hind limbs.



Fig. A Dicephalus monster

Internal Organs : Internal exploration of the monster revealed two oral cavities, two tongue and single esophagus. The type of congenital defect can be classified as Dicephalus Dipus Dibrachius Monster. Amle *et al.*

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(1999) also reported similar case of monstrosity in a crossbred cow.

Conjoined twins arise from a single ovum (Monozygotic) (Roberts, 1971). Varying degree of conjunction occur but anterior duplication is more often seen in ruminants and swine (Arthur, 1989).

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