

## **OBITURY**

**Dr. M. Hafeezullah  
(1936-2015)**

With great sadness and sorrow, this is to inform to all fellow scientists and staff of Zoological Survey of India that Dr. M. Hafeezullah, former Joint Director (Scientist-SF) passed away in the early morning of 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at his native place Gorakhpur where he had settled down after his retirement

Dr. M. Hafeezullah was born on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 1936 at Gorakhpur in eastern Uttar Pradesh. He finished his school education up to class XII from Islamia Inter College, Gorakhpur (U.P. Board). Thereafter he graduated from St. Andrews Degree College, Gorakhpur, which was affiliated to Agra University, in the year 1951. After passing B.Sc. examination, he got admission in M.Sc. Zoology at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (U.P). Though he took admission in M.Sc. with the aim to make teaching as career either in degree college or University, the circumstances did not permit him to continue his studies. It was mainly because he had been selected for the post of Draftsman in Railways, for which he had applied before he had got admission in M.Sc. previous. Since his two elder brothers were already serving in Railways in senior positions, he was convinced by all the family members to avail the opportunity and join the job. He left his studies in mid-session and joined the service in railways at Gorakhpur, his home city, in 1952. Hafeezullah worked hard with all sincerity in office but could not get job satisfaction because he still dreamed to opt for academic career. In view of his feeling and will power to come in the academic profession, he took a bold step to resign his permanent service in 1961. His wife, Akhtarun Nisa not only agreed with her husband but also assured him to share his hardships during the study period along with their daughter. His parents and brothers initially opposed his decision to resign but finally respected his feelings. Moreover, Hafeezullah's father not only agreed with his son but also assured him to support and sponsored his education in the University. In 1962, he secured admission in M.Sc. programme (Previous) in Zoology at Aligarh Muslim University.

Initially he felt some difficulties in adjusting his routine for studies, mainly for being away from his family and adjusting in hostel life after the gap of ten years (1962-1954). However, it took hardly a few weeks for him to adjust as a student in class as well as in the hostel. In M.Sc. final, he chose to specialize in Parasitology and came close to Prof. M. Shamim Jairajpuri who was giving the final shape to his Ph.D. thesis in 1963 under the guidance of Dr. Ather H. Siddiqi, a reputed helminthologist of international repute. Dr. Siddiqi and Dr. Jairajpuri found all the qualities of a good researcher in Hafeezullah and thus suggested him to join as Research Assistant in the CSIR sponsored research project on trematode parasite of

marine fishes from Indian coasts. Since this was the main objective to resign the permanent job from railways and coming to Aligarh, it did not take time for him to say 'yes' to them. Moreover, this was the group of animals of his interest.

In 1964, after prerequisite training in survey, collection, preservation and identification of trematodes for six months, he proceeded on a long extensive survey tour to east and west coasts of India. He continued his survey tour for about one and a half years. These surveys yielded a huge collection of trematodes which represented to over 100 species, of which over 30 species as new to science. In 1968, he submitted his thesis on the basis of which Ph.D. degree was awarded to him in 1969. All the findings reported in the thesis were published in the journals of international repute.

In 1970, Dr. Hafeezullah got the job of a lecturer (Zoology) in M.L.K. Postgraduate Degree College at Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh. Meanwhile, he had applied for the post of Zoologist in Zoological Survey of India for which he was selected through U.P.S.C. in 1971. Since there was no research facility in M.L.K. College, he resigned from lecturership and joined the post of Zoologist in January 1972 at the Headquarters of Zoological Survey of India in Kolkata. Here he continued as Zoologist and Officer-in-Charge of Helminthology Section in Lower Invertebrate Division till he was promoted to the post of Superintending Zoologist (Scientist-C) and transferred to Desert Regional Station (now Desert Regional Circle) in 1981. He remained posted there for about two years. From there he was transferred back in December, 1982 to the Headquarters at Kolkata where he served till his retirement.

In January 1989, Dr. Hafeezullah was promoted to the post of Deputy Director (Scientist SE) and later to the post of Joint Director (Scientist-SF) in March, 1994. During that period, he was holding the charge as Head of Lower Invertebrate Division in the Headquarters. After serving Zoological Survey of India sincerely and honestly for 22 years and seven months, he retired on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1994.

During his research career (1964-1994), he published about fifty research papers reporting a large number of trematode species in the journals of national and international repute. Out of these, he added about 60 taxa (including a few new genera) as new to science. In his research papers, the descriptions, illustrations and discussions provided by him are of high quality. Those who have worked with him will always remember him for his honesty, sincerity, punctuality, determination and perfection in research and personal work.

May Almighty God give peace to the departed soul and provide strength to the bereaved family to bear this great loss. He is bereaved by his wife (Akhtarun Nisan), one daughter (Zeenat Hafeez) and two sons (Faiz Hafeez and Masroor Hafeez).