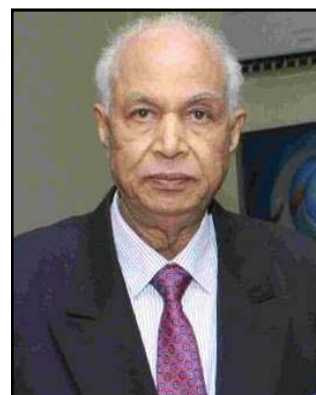


OBITUARY

PROF. MOHAMMAD SHAMIM JAIRAJPURI (1942–2024)

Professor Mohammad Shamim Jairajpuri, one of the outstanding Nematologists and a renowned world authority on nematode taxonomy passed away peacefully after a prolonged illness on 10th January, 2024 at the age of 82 at his residence, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi.

Prof. Jairajpuri started his life journey from a humble village (Jairajpur) of district Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh on 8th April, 1942. He completed his early education at Shibli High School and National Shibli College, Azamgarh from where he passed High School and Intermediate examinations (U.P. Board) with a high percentage of marks in 1955 and 1957, respectively. In the same year, he was admitted to the prestigious Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) for higher studies and was awarded B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in 1959 and 1961, respectively; and Ph.D. (1964) at a very young age of 23 years. Since Prof. Jairajpuri was having keen interest in animal science since his childhood, he had already made up his mind in B.Sc. to get admission in Zoology for post-graduation and conduct research for the Ph.D. degree. It is worth mentioning that he had prepared two research papers, under the supervision of his teacher Prof. Ather H. Siddiqi, on the systematics of helminth parasites collected by himself while he was an M.Sc. final student. His hard work and meticulous nature made it possible for him to receive a D.Sc. degree from AMU in 1969 in a minimum record time (5 years after his Ph.D. degree).



Prof. Jairajpuri was recognized as one of the versatile Nematologists because of his tremendous original contribution to Nematode taxonomy. For over five decades he worked on the taxonomy, morphology, reproductive biology, ecology and behaviour of plant and soil nematodes. He authored/edited 28 books and published over 400 research papers in reputed National and International Journals. Of these, over 80 research papers in *Nematologica* (Nematology) and about 40 in *Revue de Nematologie (Fundamentals and Applied Nematology)*, the foremost international journals in Nematology, are worth mentioning. During his research career, he has added to the science of nematology more than 400 new species, scores of new genera, subfamilies, families, superfamilies and new suborders and new order (Mononchida) of nematodes. His books on DORYLAIMIDA (1992) and MONONCHIDA (2010), co-authored with Prof. Wasim Ahmad, are the two most authentic publications which are often referred to as the Bible on these two important groups of nematodes by European Nematologists like Andr assy and Pe na Santiago, etc. In recognition of his contribution to Nematode Taxonomy, a large number of new genera (e.g., *Shamimonema*, *Jairajpuria*, *Moshajia*, etc.) and new species have been named after his name by taxonomists from different countries.

Prof. Jairajpuri was an excellent teacher and research guide; he guided 28 students to a Ph.D. degree, three of whom were later awarded a D.Sc. degree. Besides them, scores of research students and Faculty from Traditional and Agricultural Universities and Research Institutes were also trained by him in the taxonomy of plant parasitic nematodes in the South-East Asia Nematology Course (sponsored by the State University of Wageningen, The Netherlands), jointly organized by I.A.R.I., New Delhi and A.M.U. Aligarh during the 1960s and 1970s for ten years. Many of his students are world-renowned taxonomists in nematology.

Prof. Jairajpuri had a very illustrious career, starting as a Lecturer (1964) in Zoology at AMU Aligarh, Reader (1972), Professor (1983), Chairman (1988–89 & 1997–98) and Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences (1993–95 and 1997–98), AMU. He was Principal Nematologist, International Institute of Parasitology, Commonwealth Agricultural

Bureau, U.K. (1981–83). Despite having a better position and research facilities at that time, he preferred to come back to India because he never thought of settling down abroad. Just after coming back to Aligarh, he was appointed Professor of Zoology at AMU in 1983.

In October 1988, Prof. Jairajpuri was appointed as Director, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), one of the most prestigious institutions at the age of 46 years. Realizing the need for the conservation of biodiversity in the late 1980s, he organized a National Symposium titled “Taxonomy in Environment and Modern Biology” in 1990 (Platinum Jubilee year of ZSI) at Kolkata. During the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, the release of a Book edited by him “*Animal Resources of India: Protozoa to Mammalia - State of Art*” comprising papers by ZSI scientists is worth mentioning. His vision in publishing this book may be assessed from the fact that India was the only country, among all those who participated in the Biodiversity Convention at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which had updated their record of faunal resources in one volume. Though Prof. Jairajpuri was very successful in providing able leadership to ZSI, he left Kolkata for personal reasons and joined back at AMU Aligarh.

After coming back to Aligarh, Prof. Jairajpuri was appointed as Founder Director of the newly established Institute of Agriculture, AMU. Above all, he was appointed as Founder Vice Chancellor of Maulana Azad National University (MANUU), Hyderabad in 1998, where he served for five years, and was responsible for establishing the beautiful campus of MANUU from scratch and introducing various professional degree courses in Urdu.

He served as Chief Editor (1977–79) of Indian Journal of Nematology and President (1979–81) of Nematological Society of India; President Indian Society of Parasitologists (2000–02); Vice President of Indian National Science Academy (INSA) from 2001–03; President Section of Zoology, Entomology and Fisheries, Indian Science Congress (2001–02); Programme Advisory Committee ZSI/BSI, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and several Scientific Societies and International Journals in various capacities. He also served as a member of the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) of DST and DBT for a number of years.

Prof. Shamim Jairajpuri was a Fellow of the India National Science Academy (INSA); Indian Academy of Sciences (FASc); National Academy of Sciences (FNASc); National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (FNAAS); Third World Academy of Sciences, Italy (FTWAS); Institute of Biology, London (FIBiol); Linnean Society of London (FLS), and others. He was an honorary fellow of the Nematological Society of India. He has been the recipient of various National Awards which include the prestigious First ever Janaki Ammal National Award for Taxonomy (1999) by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Govt. of India; D’Souza Memorial Award by the Nematological Society of India (2005); Har Swarup Memorial Award (1998) and Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship (2008) by INSA. He was also conferred with Life Time Achievement Awards by the Nematological Society of India (2006), Indian Society of Parasitology (2007), Zoological Society of India (2008 and 2011), and Aligarh Muslim University (2009). In addition to his contribution to science and education, he was awarded “Al Ameen’s All India All Community Leadership Award” by the Al-Ameen Educational Society, Bangalore (2010) for his excellent contribution and planning as founder Vice Chancellor of Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad.

Prof. Jairajpuri was a simple, humble, honest to the core, most cooperative human being but at times an extremely stern and hard taskmaster when the need arose. In his demise, the scientific community, especially the Nematologists, has lost a great scientist, teacher and wonderful human being. The Indian Nematology Community prays to Almighty God to give peace to the departed soul in heavenly abode and solace and strength to the bereaved family and his students to bear the great loss. He is survived by his wife Professor Durdana Shamim Jairajpuri and three daughters Sheeba, Zeeba and Deeba.

Aligarh

Wasim Ahmad
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I, Dr. Matiyar Rahaman Khan hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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