

**CEYLON JOURNAL OF SCIENCE (BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE)  
ISSUE DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
DR. FELIX PRASHANTHA AMERASINGHE**



**Late Dr. Felix Prashantha Amerasinghe  
(1948 - 2005)**

## ISSUE DEDICATED TO LATE DR. F. P. AMERASINGHE

### FELIX PRASHANTHA AMERASINGHE

This issue of the Ceylon Journal of Science (Bio. Sci.) is dedicated to the memory of Dr. F.P Amerasinghe who passed away on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2005 at the age of 57. At the time of his demise he was attached to the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), CGIAR Research Center in Sri Lanka, as the theme leader for the Water, Health and Environment division. Prior to joining IWMI in 2001, Dr. Amerasinghe was attached to the University of Peradeniya, where he spent the major part of his life as an outstanding academic and a researcher.

Born in Kandy, Sri Lanka and educated in a leading school in the hill capital, Dr. Amerasinghe entered the University of Peradeniya in 1967 and though qualified to pursue a medical degree, opted to join the Faculty of Science to realize his childhood ambition of becoming a zoologist. His dreams were realized when he graduated in 1971 obtaining First Class Honours at the Special Degree in Zoology. Immediately after, he was recruited to the academic staff of the Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya. After serving as a junior lecturer, Dr. Amerasinghe proceeded to the United Kingdom for his doctoral studies at the University of Bristol, where he worked on the pheromones of the desert locust, *Schistocerca gregaria*.

Upon his return to Sri Lanka and to the Department of Zoology in 1977, he continued his university career as a dedicated and enthusiastic teacher; at the same time he built a strong research foundation in the field of medical entomology. In his mid career he took up a post in the USA as a visiting Associate Professor, in the Department of Entomology, University of Maryland, which post he held for two years. Thereafter, returning to the University Peradeniya, Dr. Amerasinghe continued research on vector-borne diseases.

Dr. Amerasinghe was appointed as Head of the Department of Zoology in 1998. The same year, he was selected to the newly established Chair in Applied Zoology as its founder professor. In 2001, he resigned from the University of Peradeniya to take up a fulltime position at the International Water Management Institute at its headquarters in Colombo, to serve the international community.

During the initial phase of his academic and research career in the University, Dr. Amerasinghe collaborated with the USAID/Mahaweli Development Board and conducted extensive studies on the environmental impact of the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Project in Sri Lanka to related changes in the faunal diversity and vector borne diseases. In the field of medical entomology, he was a specialist in taxonomy and ecology of mosquitoes and ticks, epidemiology of mosquito-borne disease with particular emphasis on problems in irrigation systems in the South Asian region. His rich research experience, spanning over 30 years, came from working in a number of countries such as Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, the United States of America, Ghana, Pakistan, India and Thailand. The publications cited at the end of this article are a testimony to the variety of related fields he researched upon during his short span of life.

With the untimely death of Dr. Amerasinghe, the scientific community of Sri Lanka lost an outstanding biologist with worldwide recognition. His colleagues and students have lost an inspiring friend and a teacher with noble morality. Among the innumerable international and national assignments he undertook and posts he held, it is pertinent to mention here that he worked as a member of the Editorial Board of the Ceylon Journal of Science (Bio Sci.) during the period 1991- 2001. Although, Dr. Amerasinghe left us too early, his scientific achievements, his accomplishments in music, singing, drama and most of all his sense of humour will be engraved in our minds for long years to come.

I was personally acquainted with Dr. Amerasinghe and his wife Priyanie during their tenure at the University of Peradeniya. I remember him with gratitude for the support he gave me in passing the many milestones in my own academic career. I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to a friend and a colleague whose work has contributed immensely to the field of Entomology. Dr. Amerasinghe through his dedicated teaching and research career has shown us that scientific research is a journey where you can leave your tracks behind and be remembered for you work, long after your departure from this world.

**List of Publications of late Dr. F.P. Amerasinghe**

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- Book Chapters**
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- This book is a new release portraying the synthesis of research work carried out during a period of 10 years under different themes. A chapter on the achievements and major findings of the water, health and environment theme written by **Felix Amerasinghe** brings out the health and agriculture linkages (Chapter 7).
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