

OBITUARY

Prof. M. Raghuraman, Professor and Head, Department of Entomology and Agricultural Zoology, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, left for his heavenly abode on 18 November 2025 at the untimely age of 52 years. His sudden demise is an irreparable loss to the academic fraternity, the scientific community, and all those whose lives he touched with his knowledge, humility, and warmth. He is survived by his beloved wife, mother, elder brother and two children, to whom he was a devoted and caring family man. Prof. Raghuraman shared a strong and supportive family life. His wife, K. Subathra, was a constant source of encouragement and strength. He was a loving father to his daughter, Vaishnavi Raghuraman, and his son, Anirudh Raghuraman, both of whom were a source of pride and joy to him.



Prof. Mahadevan Raghuraman
June 30, 1973 – November 18, 2025

Early Life and Education

He was born on 30 June 1973 in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu. Prof. Raghuraman hailed from a disciplined and value-oriented Brahmin family. He was deeply influenced by his father, late A. Mahadevan, who instilled in him strong moral values, and his mother, Smt. M. Bhanumathi, a dedicated Headmistress whose commitment to education left a profound and lasting impact on his academic pursuits. His elder brother, Shri M. Bala Subramanian, was a constant source of affection, guidance, and moral strength in his life. The bond they shared went far beyond that of siblings; it was one of mentorship, care, and unwavering support. The influence of his elder brother played a significant role in shaping Dr. Raghuraman sir into the compassionate human being and dedicated academician he became. He completed his schooling up to the 12th standard at Danish Mission Higher Secondary School, Tiruvannamalai, and went on to earn his B.Sc. (Agriculture) and M.Sc. (Agricultural Entomology) degrees from Annamalai University. Driven by an unwavering passion for research, he completed his Ph.D. in Entomology from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, in 2003.

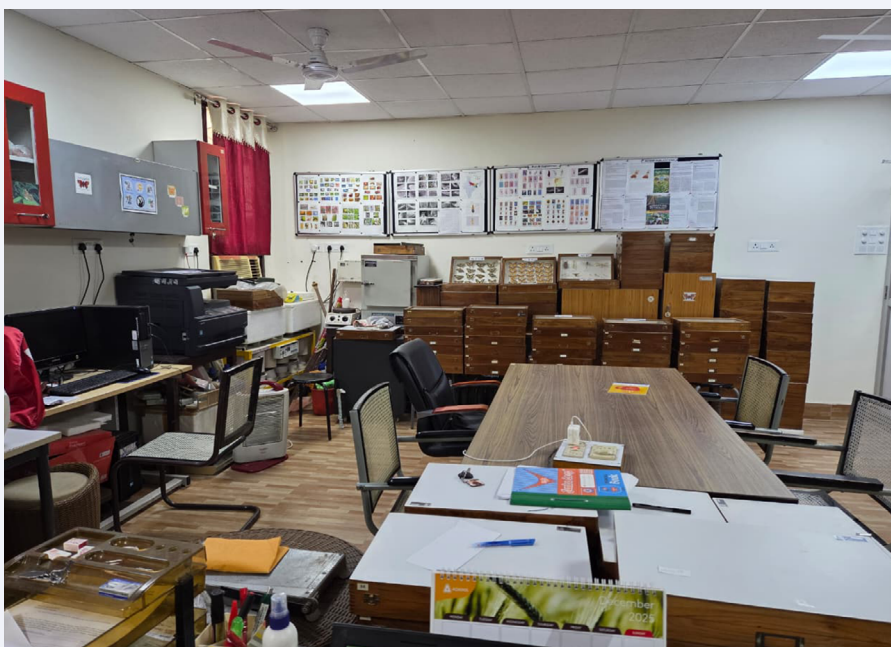
Professional Career

He commenced his academic career as an Assistant Professor of Entomology at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu (SKUAST-J, Jammu & Kashmir) on 16 July 2004, where he served with sincerity and dedication until 16 March 2007. Thereafter, on 17 March 2007, he joined Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, as an Assistant Professor of Entomology, and remained devoted to the institution throughout his academic life. In recognition of his steadfast commitment to teaching, research, and service, he was promoted to the position of Associate Professor on 17 July 2016, and subsequently elevated to Professor on 16 July 2019. He was later entrusted with the responsibility of Head of the Department of Entomology and Agricultural Zoology, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, on 24 January 2025, a role he was fulfilling with humility, wisdom, and a deep sense of responsibility till last minutes.

Professional Achievements

During his distinguished academic career, he guided nine Ph.D. scholars and more than a dozen M.Sc. students with great dedication and care. At the time of his untimely demise, six Ph.D. scholars and eight M.Sc. students were continuing their research under his supervision. His mentorship left a lasting impact on his students, many of whom continue to uphold his values in teaching and research.

He successfully executed nine externally funded research projects supported by prestigious agencies such as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and corporate partners, with a cumulative outlay of approximately ₹3.8 crore. His commitment to research excellence was reflected in his substantial scholarly output, comprising 168 publications



Insect Biosystematics Laboratory of Prof. M. Raghuraman

in reputed national and international journals and academic platforms. These include 126 research papers, six books, twenty-four book chapters, six conference and symposium papers, and five popular articles, which continue to serve as valuable resources for students and researchers alike.

He was a Fellow of several esteemed professional societies, including the Entomological Society of India and the Applied Zoological Research Association of India. He also served with distinction as an Editor for several reputed scientific journals and contributed as a Member of the Board of Studies in universities such as Nagaland University. His expertise was widely recognized, and

he was frequently called upon to serve as an Expert for the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) examinations and as a Member of the Research Advisory Committee of the Central Silk Board.

In recognition of his scholarly contributions and service to the scientific community, he was honoured with several professional fellowships and awards, including the ICAR Junior and Senior Research Fellowships, the ESI Best Presentation Award, the AZRA Young Scientist Award, the Prof. Kameshwar Rao Award, among many others. Despite these achievements, he remained a person of humility, integrity, and quiet dedication to his profession.

Research Contributions

He was keenly interested in research from his B.Sc. (Agriculture) onwards and remained deeply committed to advancing agricultural entomology and insect biosystematics throughout his career. He developed and commercialized cost-effective botanical formulations based on *Callistemon* and *Eucalyptus* for the management of cotton and chickpea pests, and evaluated several botanical molecules for pest management in rice and vegetables under DST-funded projects. His research also included the development of an artificial diet for laboratory rearing of *Helicoverpa armigera* and *Spodoptera litura*, successfully sustaining fourteen generations. He standardized bio-intensive IPM technologies for olive orchards in Jammu & Kashmir using



Some Specimen Display Boxes from his Insect Museum

Trichogramma and NPV for effective management of olive insect pests. As Principal Investigator of the ICAR Network Project on Insect Biosystematics from 2011, he conducted extensive field surveys across several states, including the North-Eastern region, leading to the collection of over 10,000

insect and plant mite specimens and documentation of springtail species from the Leh–Ladakh region. He completed, for the first time, a comprehensive checklist of Indian Apterygotes covering 352 species of Collembola under 103 genera and 18 families, and 20 species of Protura under 10 genera and 3 families, and reported the occurrence of dipluran species for the first time from northern India. His pioneering taxonomic research on soil arthropods, particularly Collembola, greatly enhanced understanding of their ecosystem services, with detailed morphological and SEM-based diagnostic studies; more than 60 species were identified up to genus and species level, including over 10 species reported for the first time. Several springtail species, including *Lepidocyrtus fimetarius*, *L. violaceus*, *Sinella curviseta*, *Ceratophysella granulata*, and *Salina* sp. nov., were studied in detail and pictorial diagnostic keys were developed. In addition, *Rhochmopterum malaviyai* Nikhil, David & Hancock was published as a new species of fruit fly.

He established and maintained a well-recognized Insect Biosystematics Laboratory and museum, identified as a nodal centre for Apterygote insects under the ICAR Network Project, housing 7,094 insect and mite specimens of different orders and providing free identification services to numerous central and state universities across India.

A Loving and Caring Supervisor

With profound grief and deep respect, we mourn the untimely passing of Prof. M. Raghuraman sir, our beloved supervisor, mentor, and guide, whose sudden demise has left an irreplaceable void in our lives. For his students, this loss goes far beyond academia; it is deeply personal and heartfelt. He was not only an outstanding scientist but also a compassionate and humble human being who guided us with patience, kindness, and quiet strength. Always approachable and gentle in his demeanor, he created an atmosphere of trust and



His Interaction with Loving Students and Staff



Department Group Photo on the occasion of Teachers' Day-2025

encouragement, allowing his students to learn, grow, and gain confidence without fear. He stood by us in moments of uncertainty, celebrated our achievements, and offered unwavering support during challenges. His humility, empathy, and respect for students will remain forever etched in our hearts. The untimely departure has left us shocked and heartbroken. It is difficult to accept that we will no longer hear his gentle guidance, see his reassuring smile, or seek his advice. The void he leaves behind in our lives and in our hearts is immeasurable. Though his physical presence is no longer with us, his values, teachings, and love for science will continue to live on through his students. Prof. Raghuraman sir will always remain our mentor and guiding light. May his noble soul rest in eternal peace.

I, Dr. Srinivasa N., first met Prof. M. Raghuraman sir on 6 November 2019, and it was he who shared with me the joyful news of my selection as Assistant Professor at Banaras Hindu University-an act that truly reflected his generous and thoughtful nature. During my initial days at

BHU, he cared for me like an elder brother, offering constant guidance, encouragement, and support. We often shared meaningful discussions about the Division of Entomology, ICAR-IARI, its academic atmosphere, eminent teachers, and rich research culture. He fondly recalled his own Ph.D. days there, cherishing those memories with great pride and warmth. Prof. Raghuraman was widely admired for his vast academic wisdom and his exceptional understanding of university ordinances related to admissions, administration, and student conduct. He served as the Examination In-charge of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences from 2011 until his demise, a responsibility regarded as one of the most respectful and critical positions in the Institute. He was also the longest-serving Secretary of the Departmental Research Committee, a role in which he earned the complete trust and confidence of all Heads of the Department. Even after his passing, his absence is deeply felt-as a caring senior colleague, a wise counsellor, and a guiding presence in administrative decision-making-leaving a void that is difficult to fill.

Despite his seniority, he was always approachable, humble, and compassionate. A loving colleague to the faculty and a respected, affectionate teacher to students, he taught a wide spectrum of courses at undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels, including Fundamentals of Entomology, Pearl Farming, Fundamentals of Nematology, Beneficial Insects, Insect Anatomy and Physiology, Toxicology of Insecticides, Concepts of IPM, Insect Toxicology and Residues, and Insect Phylogeny and Systematics. Apart from teaching, his keen interest in insect biodiversity led him to establish and maintain a well-managed Insect Biosystematics Laboratory and Insect Museum. The laboratory has been a regular point of visit for scholars, scientists, and other visitors to the Institute seeking scientific knowledge. The museum houses many valuable and rare insect specimens of immense academic and research

importance. His unwavering commitment to academia, his kindness, and his quiet dignity will remain forever etched in our hearts. May his noble soul rest in eternal peace.

Memories Shared by the Non-Teaching Staff of the Department

All the non-teaching staff have had a long experience with Professor M. Raghuraman, both within and outside the department. Our experience with Raghuraman Sir was unparalleled and unique in the field of work he performed. His soft-spoken demeanor was captivating. His teaching, administrative skills, research, and the warmth and cooperation he displayed towards his staff and colleagues were unparalleled/unique. All the employees will always be grateful for his amazing support and contribution. His sudden demise is an irreparable loss to us, department, the field of research & education.



Prof. M. Raghuraman Assuming the Charge of Head of the Department from Prof. U.P. Singh on 24/12/2025

His National and International Reputation was affirmed by numerous Honors, including:

Fellows of the society

- Fellow of Applied Zoological Research Association
- Fellow of Society of Plant Protection Sciences
- Fellow of Entomological Society of India since 2008

Role in Journals

- Editor, Indian Journal of Agriculture and Allied Sciences, ISSN: 2395-1109.
- Subject editor, Indian Journal of Entomology, ISSN: 0367-8288
- Member, Editorial Board, Journal of Plant Prot. & Environment ISSN: 0973-1717
- Member, Editorial Board, Biological forum, ISSN: 2249-3239.
- Counsellor, Journal of Plant Protection and Environment: ISSN: 0973-1717

Honorary roles

- Expert, UPSC, New Delhi
- Member, Research Advisory Committee, Central Silk Board
- Member, Board of studies – Nagaland Central University
- Member Board of studies – Dharendra Mahila Post Graduate College, Varanasi

Awards / Honours / Distinctions / Recognitions:

- “ICAR - Best Teacher Award” for Excellence in Teaching in Agriculture by BHU, funded by ICAR
- Prof. Harihar Nath Tripathi Memorial Award for excellence in teaching.
- Biodiversity Conservation Award-2023 by BV David foundation, Layola College, Chennai
- Best Scientist Award - 2023 by BV David foundation, Layola College, Chennai
- ‘SPSS Outstanding Scientist Award’ 2018 by Society of Plant Protection Sciences, IARI, New Delhi.
- “Best Oral Presentation” award by Entomological Society of India in 2014.
- “Best Oral Presentation” award by ICAR-Society for Natural Resins and Gums, 2015 in the National Entomologists Meet, 2015.
- “Dr. Kameswara Rao Best Oral Presentation Award” by Applied Zoological Research Association, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- “Distinguished Scientist Award” – 2017 by Mahima Research Foundation in collaboration with BHU, Varanasi

- “Meritorius Scientist Award” - 2017 by Society of Plant Protection Sciences, IARI, New Delhi
- ‘Outstanding Scientist Award’ – 2016 by Centre for Advanced Research, Venus International Foundation.
- ‘Excellence in Teaching Award’ - 2016 by Vignan Bharti U.P. Chapter III.
- “Young Scientist Award” - 2015 by Applied Zoological Research Association, Bhubaneshwar, Odisha.
- “Best Paper Presentation Award” In the International Conference on Frontiers of Plant Sciences and Developing Technologies, at Institute of Agric. Science, BHU, Varanasi.
- “Best Paper Presentation Award” – 2014 by Entomological Research Association, MPUAT, Udaipur
- “Mahima Agricultural Excellence Award” by Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU in collaboration with Mahima Research Foundation.
- Principal Investigator of All India Network Project on Insect Biosystematics (NPIB) from January 2011 to March 2019.
- Academic and Professional Excellence in Plant Protection” Award 2024 by MR Foundation in collaboration with Department of Entomology, Institute of Agricultural sciences, BHU, Varanasi.

Prof. M. Raghuraman sir will always be remembered as an outstanding teacher, an accomplished researcher, a dedicated administrator, and above all, a gentle and compassionate human being. His life was marked by sincerity, intellectual integrity, and selfless service to science and society. Though he is no longer with us, his contributions, values, and inspiring legacy will continue to guide students, colleagues, and researchers for generations to come. May his noble soul rest in eternal peace.

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