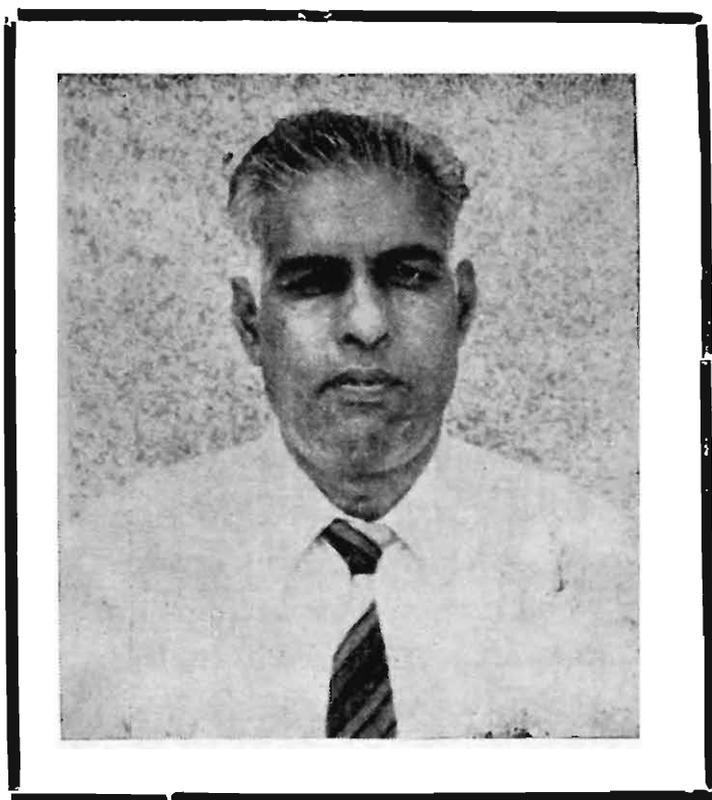


Obituary



DR KOSARAJU REDDIAH (1933-1988)—A TRIBUTE

Dr. K. Reddiah, Scientist 'SE' and late Officer-in-Charge, Fresh Water Biological Station, Zoological Survey of India, Hyderabad, was born at Pedapulivarru (Repalle Taluk, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh) on 4.7.1933 in an agriculturist family. After his early school education, he joined I.Sc., (Bi. P. C.) in Hindu College, Machilipatnam in 1949. In 1951, he joined B.Sc., Degree course with Zoology Main, Chemistry & Botany as subsidiaries in Andhra Christian College, Guntur. He took his M.Sc., Degree from Agra College, Agra in 1955 under the eminent herpetologist, Prof. Dr B. C. Mahendra, D.Sc., F.A.Z., with Fish & Fisheries as a special subject. He stood second in the Agra University during that year. He then joined as Research Assistant in Sericultural Research Station at Dehra Dun. He also worked as a Lecturer in Zoology in Andhra Christian College, Guntur, for about a year. Thereafter he went to Liverpool on his own, and obtained the Ph. D. Degree, submitting his thesis in a record time. During the course of his Ph. D. work, he discovered new breeding grounds of edible bivalves in U. K., and was very much appreciated. Simultaneously, he also worked on parasitic copepods of bivalves and contributed a series of papers on the subject in reputed foreign journals. A staunch Nationalist, that he was, he returned to India, ignoring the opportunities he had in the West unlike many at that period and joined as Pool Officer in Annamalai University. In 1960 he was selected

to the post of Zoologist and joined as Officer-in-Charge of Eastern Regional Station, ZSI, Shillong and was responsible for the development of the Station which was at its infancy. Consequent to the First Reviewing Committee's recommendations that the services of this well trained Marine Zoologist should be better utilized, he was transferred to Southern Regional Station, ZSI, Madras, on 4.2.1962 as its Officer-in-Charge, a position he held till 12.1.1972. During this tenure, being a good marksman, he added a good number of specimens of birds and mammals, and laid the foundation for a scientific museum at the Station. He was selected Superintending Zoologist (17.3.1965) as a direct recruit again, and later was posted to the Publication Division (Hqrs.), Calcutta (29.2.1972). During his tenure there, he was assigned the special task of locating corals of medicinal importance, in view of his expertise on corals and coral reefs of India, a task he admirably fulfilled, by locating them around Andaman Islands. He was later transferred to the Western Regional Station, Pune (28.7.1975), and consequent to his promotion as Deputy Director, he was posted Officer-in-Charge, Central Regional Station, Jabalpur from 29.9.1976 to March, 1984. From there he was transferred to the Marine Biological Station, Madras. A few months before his sudden and untimely demise on 30.1.1988, he was transferred to the Fresh Water Biological Station, Z. S. I., Hyderabad (July, 1987) as Officer-in-Charge.

A stickler for rules, regulations and administrative protocol, Dr Reddiah was equally well known for his uncanny ability to fight for justice, rights or privileges and therefore remained an enigmatic personality. An advocate for decentralization of powers, he allowed his junior scientists to pursue researches freely in their fields of interest. Being one of the top scientists in the Department, he expected that one day he may have to head it, and therefore had a lot of perspective plans for its development which he discussed, at times, with a selected few. Unfortunately, these plans remained dormant with him—for, he neither had the opportunity to head it, nor could these be utilized and he being an introvert by nature, never discussed them with those in power to avoid controversies. He was one with a great vision and one of his unpublished works on the organization, development of marine survey and taxonomy of the marine animals and its future, would have been a useful compendium had he completed and published it. Long before the Fishery Survey of India came into being, he felt the need for such an organization in India within the Zoological Survey. An authority on corals and coral reef development, likewise, his expertise and observations on Corals died along with him.

Born in a rich family of Kammas, Dr Kosaraju Reddiah Choudary, was a down-to-earth person and took the earliest opportunity to drop the suffix indicating his caste. Dr Reddiah's noblest trait was "Forgive & Forget", and therefore, those who knew him intimately are aware that he regarded none his enemy and never harboured ill-will, trying to avoid confrontations except when he was fighting for justice. Even when he lost his fight, he quickly reconciled himself like a philosopher, a fact only a very few appreciated. He used to get agitated when his inner philosophy of contentment clashed with the denial of basic rights and this coupled with his introvert nature, made him the least understood of personalities in the Z.S.I.

Dr. Reddiah, was very generous and helped many in need with both cash and kind without other's knowledge and never bothered about its return, timing or reciprocation. The fact that his colleagues in the Zoological Survey of India, Madras, where he worked for a considerable time, though at various spells, spontaneously paid homage to him through the newspaper shows their deep sense of affection and appreciation to this noble soul. He was an excellent host and many have enjoyed his hospitality both at home and outside. Dr Reddiah was also a good swimmer and an outstanding chess player and won the Open All England Chess Championship in 1958.

In Dr Reddiah's passing away, the Department has lost a good marine zoologist and a very honest officer who loved the Department very deeply, in spite of the ordeals and tribulations, he had undergone. Dr. Reddiah leaves behind his wife, and four sons. He always wished for the prosperity of his colleagues and friends. Many of us, his colleagues, would miss his spontaneous, uncontrollable laughter, which would come only from a man with pure heart.

May his soul rest in peace by Providential Grace.

K. V. LAKSHMINARAYANA