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Special Release

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OBITUARY

PROFESSOR (CHIEF) BENJAMIN EKUNDAYO OLUFEMI, JP (15 January 1945 – 13 April 2021)

The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adebola Babatunde Ekanola, FNAL, fspsp announces with deep regret, the transition of Professor Benjamin Ekundayo Olufemi, a staff in the Department of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Ibadan. The sad event occurred on Tuesday, 13 April, 2021.

Late Professor Benjamin Ekundayo Olufemi was born on the 15 January, 1945 at Omuo-Jero in Ekiti state to Late Pastor Thomas Kehinde Olufemi and Late Princess Janet Omojare Olufemi (nee Ajiboye). His father was a Seventh-Day Adventist Pastor who served in several towns and villages. Owing to the itinerant nature of his father's profession, his primary education was received in several primary schools, culminating in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Agodi Gate, Ibadan.

After his primary education, he went to Modern School not because he was not brilliant but because of lack of finances. The little Benjamin so much loved to obtain Secondary Education that he 'rebelled' and left school to work as a building apprentice as a way of protest. However, God Almighty saw the little boy's desire, by moving the Seventh-Day Adventist Church to establish a new secondary school in Ede, Osun state. His father being an Adventist Pastor was advised to send him to Ede which he did and he became one of the 29 foundation students of the Adventist Grammar School, Ede in February, 1961. His love for education took him further to the Federal School of Science, Lagos, where he passed his A-levels with flying colours.

Late Prof. Olufemi was a Western State of Nigeria Government Scholar (1968 - 1973) by competitive examination and a University of Ibadan Scholar (1969 - 1973). He graduated with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree and was subsequently registered as a Veterinary Surgeon in Nigeria in 1973. He was a member of the foundation set of the National Youth Service Corps NYSC, from July 1973 to June 1974. Thereafter, he was employed by the Nigerian Government Civil Service Commission as a Veterinary Research Officer, Grade II, and posted to the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) Vom, Plateau State, where he worked in the Investigative and Diagnostic Division of the Institute.

In 1975, he took up employment with the University of Ibadan as a Lecturer Grade II, and thus began his stellar academic career. Late Professor Olufemi was a distinguished Academic, a Professor of Veterinary Medicine with specialization in Swine and Fish Medicine, pre-eminent in his field and had over 35 years of experience as a University teacher in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, Africa and around the world. He rose through the ranks, being actively involved in teaching, research and curriculum development, to eventually become a **Professor** in 1991, which he was for 20 years until his retirement in 2011.

He was a British Council Technical Cooperation Study Fellow and also alumnus of the University of Liverpool, England, having graduated at the top of his class in 1978 with a Master of Veterinary Science (MVSc.) degree in Applied Parasitology. He was also an alumnus of the Centre of Excellence for Aquaculture in Europe, the Institute of Aquaculture, University of Stirling, Scotland where he completed a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Aquatic Pathobiology in 1984.

Late Prof. Olufemi was a Member and Fellow of many professional organisations a few of which include: The Institute of Biology, London (MIBiol, 1980), The Royal Entomological Society of London, (FRES, 1981), The Nigerian Institute of Management (FNIM, 1984), The Nigerian Institute of Biology (FNIBiol, 1990), The College of Veterinary Surgeons, Nigeria (FCVSN, 2003).

He was at various times, a Visiting Professor to several institutions including the Department of Veterinary Medicine, Usman Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto (1990); Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Adamawa State University, Mubi (2005 - 2007); Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State (2007 - 2011); Faculty of Agriculture, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) 2012-2013 and Department of Bioscience and Biotechnology, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland (1993 -1994), where he was a Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellow.

Late Prof. Olufemi was such a diligent and a jovial personality with a unique teaching style. His life positively impacted and influenced many as his teaching spanned across the undergraduate to the postgraduate levels, in which he developed and taught various courses across 3 faculties: Veterinary Medicine, Science as well as Wildlife and Fisheries Management from 1975 to 2011. During this time, and well into post-retirement he supervised, co-supervised and examined numerous MVSc. and PhD titles as an internal and external Examiner. He was a beloved teacher to numerous Professors within the University system and professional colleagues within the industry.

A prolific Researcher, his works centred mainly on the management of diseases of domestic animals and cultured fresh water fish species, with 74 scholarly international publications. A monumental work is *"The description of Aspergillus species as Pathogens of Cultured Fresh Water Fish species"*.

He was the President of the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association, (NVMA) Oyo state (1988 - 1990). His vast administrative and managerial experience included but not limited to: the Sub-Dean (undergraduate & postgraduate) (1979 - 81; 87 - 89), Dean of Students (1996 - 2000), Head of Department and Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Ibadan (2001 - 2003; 2003 - 2005), Head of Department and Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria (2005 - 2006; 2006 - 2007), Dean, School of Leadership, The Premier University of Sao Tome and Principe (2013) to mention a few. He was a Member of the University of Ibadan Senate from 1987 to 2011, and panel member of the working committee appointed by the National Universities Commission (NUC) for the formulation of the Bench mark minimum academic standards for Veterinary Medicine, for all Nigerian Universities. In addition, he was appointed Head, Medicine Specialty, College of Veterinary Surgeons, Nigeria (CVSN) (2008 to date).

He was a member of the Editorial Boards of numerous scholarly journals and was Editor-in-Chief (1992 - 1996) of "The Tropical Veterinarian", an international journal devoted to the diseases of animals in the tropics, published by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Ibadan.

He was actively involved in public service, and appointed as a Justice of the Peace (JP) by the Oyo and Osun State Governments in 1998 and 1999 respectively. A native of Ìmèsí-Ilé, in Obokun Local Government Area of Osun state, Nigeria, he was the founding Rector of the Ìmèsí-Ilé Polytechnic and also the Sàlórò of Ìmèsí-Ilé. He was an ordained Elder of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

He was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science (DVSc.) by the University of Liverpool, Liverpool, England in December, 2020, based on the merit of his lifetime contribution to Veterinary Medicine. He was set to receive this at a ceremony in June, 2021.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Mrs. Joyce Adeola Olufemi, children and grandchildren.

He was 76 years old and will be sorely missed.

May his soul rest in peace.

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