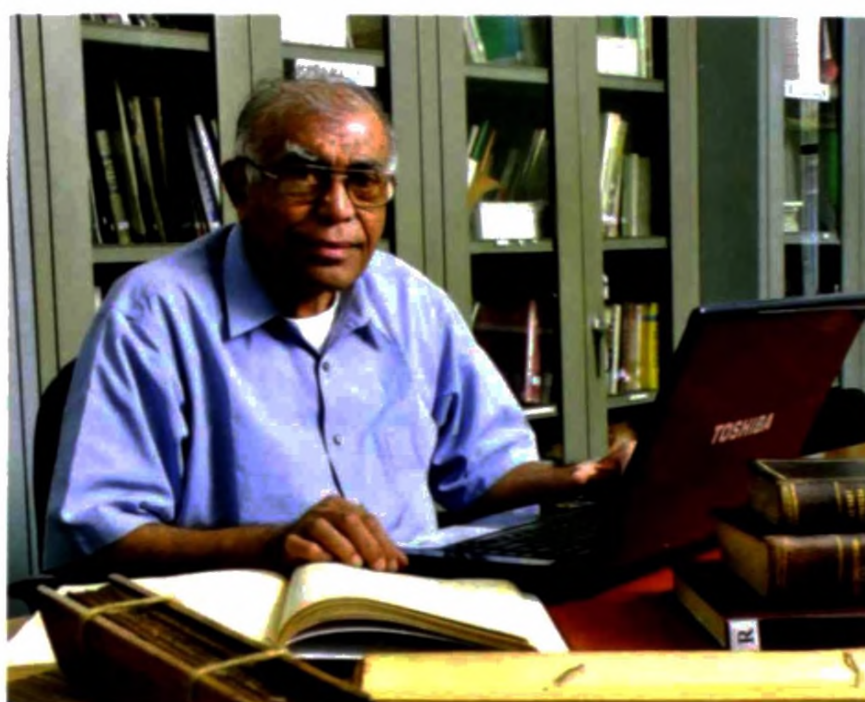


EDITORIAL



We have now to commemorate a landmark stage when the LINK NATURAL DIGEST which commenced publication as the LINK NATURAL PRODUCTS DIGEST in 2004 reaches the ten year mark with the present issue. We commenced with the objectives that we defined then as follows: *“To combine the twin goals of introducing the company and its products and philosophy to its customers as well as underpinning the scientific and technological foundation based on which these products are manufactured. The idea is to be transparent in regard to its activities and to share with its customers the methodology and rigour with which the company’s products are made. We wish to underscore the issue that when the company sells its products, with them the company also sells its underlying research and scientific knowledge.”*

Although at the time they seemed lofty and ambitious for a modest company albeit with a science engine governing its activities ranging from the procurement of raw materials through their processing, quality control, and the development of products, we are proud to state that they have largely been accomplished. We have developed an appreciative clientele of readers, worldwide and will be looking to expand their range. The subject of Natural Products, also referred to as Phytochemistry in Europe,

emerged as a definite discipline first as a specific branch of chemistry when research chemists had accumulated a plethora of organic compounds which had interesting characteristics, like bioactivity or interesting odour characteristics. Prior to this and for centuries preceding modern times, traditional societies all over the world had been using plant-derived products as cosmetics, fragrances, and medicaments. In the warfare of yore, arrow poisons were derived from plants.

In modern terms these are recognised as herbal products and the sale of these products measured in billions of dollars include the cosmetics, fragrance industries, as well as the pharmaceutical and personal care industries. Today there is major interest in these herbal industries as they are deemed to be more empathetic with the human system than synthetic products, which had burgeoned into use just after the Second World War. The scientific nature of these herbal products can now be studied in great detail due to the development of the spectacularly wide range of techniques in analytical methodology. Mankind has then a new box of powerful tools for such studies.

Over the ten years of its existence the articles of the LINK NATURAL DIGEST portrayed these developments as well as some of the men and women who made these possible and the scientific intricacies of the natural plant products themselves. The stories would never have been complete without the historical theories that went to illustrate the thinking of mankind as they progressed from the traditional to the scientific age, and this aspect too has received attention.

The LINK NATURAL DIGEST now seeks to continue on its ambitious and interesting trail seeking new methods of enhancing the numbers it will be able to influence in the next decade to come.

R. O. B. Wijesekera