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President Message



Welcome to January-April 2017 Issue

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Pharmacognosy is defined as “the branch of knowledge concerned with medicinal drugs obtained from plants or other natural sources”. It is very possible that human beings have suffered from diseases since their very advent. Quite naturally, our ancestors must have tried substances of plant, animal or mineral origin to get rid of their disease-induced discomforts, even though these trials have not been recorded in those early times. However, since historical records have been maintained, we know for sure that various diseases have afflicted human beings, and various remedies have been tried as treatment for these diseases. In fact, whole philosophical systems have been developed in trying to explain why diseases occur and how they can be cured. Traditional Mongolian medicine has been reported to be developed at least 5,000 years ago. The first records of traditional Chinese medicine date back to eleventh century BC during the Shang dynasty. The major traditional medicine of India, namely Ayurveda, was recorded more than 5,000 years ago. Other countries of Asia also have traditional medicinal systems which date back hundreds to thousands of years ago. The need for new medicines has possibly never been greater than in the present age. Many new diseases have emerged including AIDS and a host of new viral diseases like bird flu, Ebola, and Zika. Along with the new diseases have emerged drug-resistant vectors such that diseases like malaria or tuberculosis is requiring new medicines. Other rapidly spreading disorders like diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, and arthritis have no satisfactory modern medicines for treatment. Thus the world is in dire need for new types of medicines, which can allow human beings to be cured from a number of incurable diseases at present. Plants have always formed a source of new drugs. Asia with its vast size, rich diversity of climate and plant species can be a fruitful ground for discovery of new and effective drugs. However, sad to say, Asia has been lagging far behind in the field of pharmacognosy. This has got to be remedied and the newly formed Asian Society of Pharmacognosy is a step in the right direction. It is also heartening to see that the Society has wasted no time in bringing forth a new journal entitled Asian Journal of Pharmacognosy. I am confident that both the Society and the Journal can form new forums where Asian scientists can discuss various issues, build up collaborations, publish their research findings and so develop pharmacognosy in Asia, which actually will benefit the whole world. Cumulative thanks must go to the members of the Society and the Journal Editorial Board. Last but not least, a very special thanks from all of us to Dr. Christophe Wiart for his untiring efforts in making the Society a success. No doubt that this success will be duplicated also in the Journal, which can become the premier Journal in Pharmacognosy in the whole world.