THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS (SFEC-2015) OF SOCIETY FOR ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY, INDIA

The second International Congress (SFEC-2015) of the Society for Ethnopharmacology, India (SFE-India) was organized by the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur during February 20–22, 2015 with the theme “validation of medicinal plants and traditional medicine – global perspectives.” The congress has witnessed mammoth gathering of about 1000 delegates around 20 countries all over the world. About 65 lectures from eminent speakers throughout the globe and more than 500 scientific oral and poster presentations.

A series of preconference workshops were organized to ascertain various technicalities related to natural product research and ethnopharmacology. The first section was carried out at Gurunanak College of Pharmacy, Nagpur on the theme “Scope for Research in Natural Products, Funding Opportunities, and Publication.” Eminent editors/editorial board members of various impact journals and scientists from government several funding agencies of India talked on also gave their deliberations on various schemes and funding opportunities from Government of India in promotion of Natural Products Research. Dr. Pulok K. Mukherjee, Associate Editor, Journal of Ethnopharmacology, Elsevier; Dr. Michael Heinrich, Editor, Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, Pharmaceutical Press, UK; Dr. Anna Jager, Associate Editor, Journal of Ethnopharmacology, Denmark, Dr. Rita Banerjee, Scientist F, Department of Science and Technology, Dr. Neeraj Tandon, Scientist F, Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi and Dr. Tapan Kumar Mukherjee, Ex-Editor, Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge, CSIR-NISCAIR, India delivered their lectures. These workshops focused on the technique for writing high impact good quality paper in impact journals and also became aware of about the various funding opportunities in the field of natural product research for the students and researchers.

Simultaneously, the second section of the workshop was organized at the Department of Pharmaceutical

Sciences, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur on the topic “Research Methodology, Molecular and Chromatographic Modes of herbal Drug Standardization and Role of Stereotaxic Neurosurgery in Ethnopharmacological Research.” Dr. Geoffrey Cordell, President, Natural Products Inc., Evanston, USA spoke on Methodologies involved in Plant Research, Ethics of Researcher and Publication of Research. Mr. Akshay Charegaonkar, MD, Anchrom, Mumbai and Dr. Pravin Wakte, Department of Chemical Technology, BAMU, Aurangabad, India discussed on different issues related to chromatographic evaluations of herbal drugs, Dr. T. Shrinivasu, Head, Molecular Biology and Genetic Engineering, R.T.M. Nagpur University talked delivered a speech on Recent Advancement in Plant Biotechnology and its Role in Identification and Standardization of Medicinal Plants, while Dr. Rajesh Ugale, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, R.T.M. Nagpur University demonstrated Application of Stereotaxic Neurosurgery in Ethnopharmacological Research.

The third part of the preconference workshop included demonstration on “Panchakarma and Ksharsutra,” which was conducted at Baidyanath Life Sciences, Civil Lines, Nagpur, India by Dr. M. N. Suryawanshi, Assistant Director, AYUSH Research Centre, Nagpur, Dr. Subhash Raut and Dr. Ghanshyamdas Kodwani, Government Ayurveda College, Nagpur.

The congress was inaugurated by Dr. Chandreshwar P. Thakur, Former Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, Shri Shekhar Dutt, Ex-Governor of Chhattisgarh, Dr. Vinayak Deshpande, Vice Chancellor, Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Nagpur at Vasant Rao Deshpande Hall, Nagpur. Other respected dignitaries who attended the program were Dr. Vedprakash Mishra, Chancellor, Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University, Karad, Prof. Anna Jager, President, International SFE UK, Dr. Michael Heinrich Professor, The School of Pharmacy, London, Dr. Pratim Banerji, President, SFE, India, Dr. Pulok K. Mukherjee, Secretary, SFE, India, Mr. A. K. Nigam (IFS), Managing Director, Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra, Nagpur, Shri. Ashok Giri, Joint Commissioner, Food and Drugs Administration, Nagpur, Dr. Naresh Gaikwad, Chairman LOC, SFEC-2015, Dr. Pramod G. Yeole, Convener, SFEC-2015 and Dr. Prakash Itankar, Organizing Secretary, SFEC-2015. The inaugural function includes the felicitation of the eminent scientists and ethnopharmacologists were made in this function followed by the introduction of society by Dr. Pulok K. Mukherjee, Secretary,

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SFE-India and special keynote lectures by Prof. C. K. Kokate, Vice Chancellor, KLE University, India; Dr. Geoffrey Cordell, President, Natural Products Inc., Evanston, USA and Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan, from the University of Pune, Pune, India.

Annual awards of the SFE, India (SFE-India) were conferred to the eminent scientists for outstanding contributions on ethnopharmacology during the inaugural program [Figure 1].

- Dr. C. K. Kokate received the SFE Lifetime Achievement Award (Bisheswar Saha Memorial Award);
- Dr. Geoffrey Cordell received the SFE Outstanding International Ethnopharmacologists Award (Pranab Banerji Memorial Award);
- SFE Outstanding Indian Ethnopharmacologists Award (Harihar Mukherjee Memorial Award) was conferred to Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan;
- Dr. Ajay Kumar Singh Rawat received the SFE-ZANDU Award 2015 for “Best Research on Plant Drug;”
- SFE-Special Recognition Award 2015 was awarded to Mr. Sibeswar Saha, and Mrs. Sibylle U. Saha for their role in establishing and promoting the society;
- Mr. Birendra Kumar Sarkar received the SFE-Special Recognition Award 2015 for their his invaluable contribution in the development of the society and dissemination of knowledge;
- The “SFE Outstanding Service Award 2015” was received by Dr. Prakash R. Itankar for his valuable untiring contribution in promoting the Society and organizing the Conference at Nagpur;
- M/s. Shree Baidyanath Ayurved Bhawan Pvt., Ltd., Nagpur was honored with the “SFE-Herbal industry leader award 2015.”

Several special lectures and plenary lectures were delivered on critical issues for the promotion and globalization of

traditional medicine, ethnopharmacology and medicinal plant research by a galaxy of eminent scientists and researchers around the world from all over the world. Among them includes, Dr. Geoffrey Cordell, USA, Prof. Anna Jäger, Denmark; Dr. Michael Heinrich, UK, Dr. Hiroyuki Fukui, Japan, Dr. Bernard Mouillac, France, Prof. Elin Yulinah Sukandar, Indonesia; Dr. Dilip Ghosh, Australia, Dr. Ganesh Thakur, USA, Dr. Yusuf Ozturk, Turkey, Dr. Colin Wright, UK, Dr. Mohammed Razdar Khan, Canada, Dr. Alvaro Viljoen, South Africa, Dr. Namrita Lall, South Africa, Dr. Marco Leonti, Italy, Dr. D. K. Mitra, India, Dr. Tuhinadri Sen, India, Mr. Jarnail Singh (IFS), India, Dr. Sitesh C. Bachar, Bangladesh, Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan, India, Dr. Chandra Kant Katiyar, India, Dr. D. Chattopadhyay, India, Dr. A. K. S. Rawat, India, Dr. Anjan Adhikari, India, Dr. Olatunde P. Ajagbonna, Nigeria, and many other representing 20 countries of the world delivered their valuable talks.

The congress also had a display of various exhibitions on related to research based natural products research and dissemination of knowledge regarding the importance of traditional medicine compared to conventional one. The stall represented by the Forrest Development Corporation of Maharashtra was highly appreciated, where more than 25 vaidyas (traditional healers) represented from different zones parts of the country displaying traditional and focal folk medicines of their respective zone. The exhibition included stalls displaying their food, herbal, nutritive products, and chemical reagents from Nisha Herbals Pvt., Ltd., Nagpur, Shree Baidyanath Ayurved Bhawan Pvt., Ltd, Nagpur, Gondwana Herbs Pvt., Ltd., Dhule, Zim Laboratories Pvt., Ltd., Nagpur and MGIRI Pvt., Ltd., Wardha; Alka Scientific Instruments Pvt., Ltd., Nagpur, etc.

A special highlight of the congress was the Business Conclave Meet of industrialists dealing with herbal medicines, which was organized in the gracious presence of Hon'ble Shri Nitinji Gadkari (Union Transport Minister, Government of India, New Delhi, India), where all the critical issues related with the bottlenecks in the herbal industry, promotion and marketing strategies to meet the demand of herbal medicines to common people were discussed. It was decided to prepare a policy guideline in the form a memorandum to be submitted to The Central Government, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of AYUSH, and the Maharashtra State Government after having a series of talks with various stakeholders.

The conference ended with a valedictory program with the prize distribution of scientific oral and poster presentation. In the valedictory program, special recognition was made by SFE-India and ISE, UK to the organizers to recognize

Figure 1: Inauguration of SFE-India 2015 at Vasant Rao Deshpande Hall, Nagpur

their services for the promotion ethnopharmacology in India. Thus, the second congress of the society was very successful in every aspect.

SFE-India is a registered society, under the West Bengal Society Registration act, and is affiliated to the International SFE, UK. The society was formed in 2013 and already has made its presence through the country India, which provides a networking opportunity for development and promotion of medicinal plants and natural products. The Society works on the dissemination of knowledge in this area through different local chapters made in different parts of India with the major highlights on “globalizing local knowledge and localizing global technologies.”

The third International congress of the society will be organized by the Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur during February, 2016. We invite all of you to join the society and explore the opportunities. The society is working will work for the promotion and development of medicinal plant research and ethnopharmacology through some integrated approaches. More information on the activities, awards and membership of the society is available on the society website: www.ethnopharmacology.in.

For further information, please contact Dr. Pulok K. Mukherjee, Secretary, SFE-INDIA and Director, School of Natural Product Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata - 700 032, India. We invite you all to join in this forum and explore the opportunities related to ethnopharmacology in all aspects. For details, please visit www.ethnopharmacology.in and contact:

*Dr. Pulok K. Mukherjee, PhD, FRSC
The Secretary,
Society for Ethnopharmacology, India
E-mail: sfeindian@gmail.com
23/ 3 Saketigarh, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700 032,
West Bengal, India.*

*Pulok K. Mukherjee, Amit Kar, Joydeb Chanda
Department of Pharmaceutical Technology, School of Natural
Product Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, West Bengal, India
E-mail: sfeindian@gmail.com*

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