

## Editorial

The International Symposium on Separation Sciences (SSS '98) was organised for the first time in Bhopal, India. The meeting is a result of two different joint EC projects between the Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) in Bhopal, the Rani Durgavati University (RDU) in Jabalpur, The University of Amsterdam (UvA) and the Free University (VU) in Amsterdam. In November 1998, SSS '98 and a short course on separation sciences were organised by Dr Sunil Sanghi of the RRL, in cooperation with the RDU, UvA and VU.

Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh, is a fascinating amalgam of scenic beauty, historical and modern urban planning. It is situated on the site of an old city from the eleventh century, founded by Raja Bhoja. The founder of the existing city, however, was a wealthy Afghan soldier by the name of Dost Mohammed. Fleeing from Delhi in the chaotic period that followed Aurangzeb's death, Dost Mohammed encountered the beautiful Gond Queen Kamlapati, who sought his aid after the murder of her consort. A charming legend relates how the Queen would recline in a lotus barge that would drift across the lake on moonlight nights. The two lakes of Bhopal still dominate the city, and are indeed its centre. Along their shores stand silent sentinels that testify the growth of the city. Bhopal today has many faces, the old city with its teeming market places and fine old mosques and palaces still bears the aristocratic imprint of its former rulers, among them the succession of powerful Begums

who ruled Bhopal from 1819 to 1926. Equally impressive is the new city, with its verdant, exquisitely laid out parks and gardens, broad avenues and streamlined modern edifices.

The objectives of the symposium and short course were to educate both experienced and less experienced separation scientists in the latest trends and technologies in the separation sciences. Well-experienced researchers both from abroad and India provided contributions on the wide applicability of chromatography and electrophoresis, with the vision of encouraging the participants to apply new techniques and methodologies. SSS '98 has enabled the formation of a platform where the chromatographers of South East Asia could discuss their research, problems and latest achievements.

In this Special Issue, some of the oral and poster presentations are gathered together, showing the high quality of research performed in academia as well as in the pharmaceutical industry in India. The next SSS meeting will be organised, in the spring of 2000, in Jabalpur and hosted by Dr Krishna Verma. Again, this will be a good opportunity for stimulating discussions and to welcome international colleagues.

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