Editorial

Microorganisms in the Service of Mankind

The current number of *Vidurva* presents a valuable and fascinating set of articles on a theme that had not been previously subject to discussion.

Microbes as one may note from these presentations, appear as a unique class of living organisms which have played a significant role in the life and times of *Homo sapiens*. In fact these organisms appear to be indispensable for the continuation of life forms on earth, which apparently they had themselves been responsible for its creation. Although some of the subject matter in these articles may be beyond the comprehension of the traditional reader of this magazine, what may seem to be insensible is why this precious gift of nature failed to reach the limelight it deserves. As of now most of the developments and knowledge on the vast capabilities of microbes appear to be in the hands of research scientists, who may themselves be examining the potentials and possible applications of their findings in economically feasible process technologies.

In this context it is interesting to note with expectations the physico-chemical possibilities, and the basis of transforming the virtually insoluble Eppawela Rock Phosphate deposit to a soluble and economically usable phosphate fertilizer with the active involvement of specific microbes.

Another significant observation is the use of microbes in the formulation of "Next Generation Biofertilizers",. The Editor, as a former research scientist attached to the plantation sector, acknowledges with appreciation this fascinating research study on the potentials of transforming the traditional system of agriculture to new heights through the application of microbe – generated biofertilizers.

The team of scientists participating in this project have, in fact coined a new expression called "Omics" which seems to be a tool or mechanism that involves the simultaneous or integrated application of the processes referred to by these authors as metagenomics, metatranscriptomics, metaproteonics and metabolomics, all of which had not been in common use in the past. Although the contents of this impressive article may appear beyond the understanding of the lay reader of this magazine, it deserves the recognition and appreciation as a pioneering effort to explore a hitherto feebly understood field of science. It is likely that the final outcome of these investigations may even receive global recognition as a new pathway towards environment- friendly agriculture.

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