

## Preface

Organic chemistry is one of the fundamental and very important branches of science. The last century has witnessed a dramatic growth in all facets of research in organic chemistry, viz. isolation of novel and complex natural products from terrestrial and marine sources; development of innovative methodologies for the synthesis of novel and complex organic compounds; development of efficient catalysts for bringing out regio-, stereo- and enantioselective transformations; synthesis of compounds which exhibit useful biological properties targeted towards drugs or material properties for producing molecular devices such as molecular switches and liquid crystals; development of modern techniques for environmentally friendly (green chemistry) industrial processes, etc. Organic chemistry is currently in a phase of change and expansion. As rightly pointed out in one of the recent editorials of *Nature*, because of the modesty of organic chemists, quite often others under-appreciate the efforts of an organic chemist. Fundamental skills of organic chemists such as synthesis and analysis are vital to a variety of interdisciplinary areas. As a result, large numbers of practising organic chemists are being lured to jump into the edges of organic chemistry to collaborate with biologists, physicists, engineers and computer scientists, without appreciating the fundamentals of the subject.

During the last three-four decades, contributions to the field of organic chemistry from India have steadily increased as reflected by the gradual increase in the number of research publications in national and international journals. Despite the strong negative impact of information technology on research in basic sciences, it is heartening to note that organic chemistry is still a favorite subject of many young and motivated students.

We have pleasure in bringing out these special issues of the *Journal of the Indian Institute of Science* in admiration of Professor S. C. Bhattacharyya, a doyen of natural product chemistry, who has inspired generations of organic chemists. His former students, admirers and young active organic chemists, on special invitation, contributed articles for these issues.

It is our pleasure to express our gratitude to all the distinguished authors who graciously responded to our invitation as a token of respect and tribute to Prof. Bhattacharyya, and to reviewers who did a meticulous job. We thank Prof. Goverdhan Mehta, Director, Indian Institute of Science, and Prof. M. S. Shaila, Editor of the *Journal* for their keen interest in bringing out these special issues. Our special thanks are due to Mr K. Sreenivasa Rao and his team for their help and assistance.

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