Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar

Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar, the former Director of the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) is a renowned synthetic organic chemist and has made significant contributions in diverse areas of organic chemistry with special emphasis on chiral chemistry, total synthesis of biologically active natural products and pharmaceutical products. He introduced polyethylene glycol (PEG) as a novel, environmentally benign solvent medium. He has developed technologies for the synthesis of latest anti-tuberculosis drug, bedaquiline; anti-tumor and abortive drug, misoprostol; anti-platelet molecule, beraprost; antidepressive compound, sertralin and drug for treatment of schizophrenia, asenapine.

His passion and commitment to topical health-related problems is evident in his provisioning for better and affordable access to important drugs. His research efforts, with an impressive degree of innovation and enterprise, have led to the synthesis of complex and scarcely available natural products and new molecular entities for affordable healthcare. His endeavors have provided cost-effective technologies to the chemical industry through the identification of new reagents / solvents for specific transformations.

Born in 1964 Dr Chandrasekhar completed his primary and higher education in Hyderabad and Joined CSIR, IICT for a Ph. D Programme. After completing his Ph. D (1991) with the then director Dr. A. V. Rama Rao, he moved to USA for a post-doctoral position with Prof. J. R. Falck (1991-94). He joined CSIR-IICT as Scientist C in 1994 and grew upto the level of director in 2015. He is a fellow of all the three Indian Science academies, i.e., National Academy of Sciences, Indian Academy of Sciences and Indian National Science academy. He is also an Alexander von Humboldt fellow.

He was appointed as the director of the DST in 2021, and served until 2023. During his tenure as a Secretary at DST, he led some of the major projects, including India's National Quantum Mission, aimed at developing quantum computing capabilities in laboratories and companies across India.

He has received several accolades including Eminent Scientist Award for contributions in the field of Chemistry from Telangana State Government in 2017, CNR Rao National Prize for Chemical Research 2012, CSIR Technology award 2014 and Infosys prize in Chemical sciences 2014 for his contributions in synthetic organic chemistry with special focus on the synthesis of complex molecules from natural sources and innovative, practical approaches to pharmaceuticals of current interest to industry.

Dr. Prathama Mainkar

Dr. Prathama Mainkar is a driven and accomplished Research & Development Scientist currently serving as Vice President at PIHSL, located in the Greater Hyderabad Area. With a robust background in chemistry and drug discovery, she brings extensive scientific expertise and leadership to the pharmaceutical and chemical research domains. Prior to her current role, Ms. Mainkar contributed to cutting-edge research at CSIR-IICT (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Indian Institute of Chemical Technology), where she deepened her focus on innovative scientific methodologies and translational research. Her work is recognized for its rigor and relevance in advancing therapeutic and chemical solutions.

Dr. Tom Thomas

Dr. Tom Thomas is an accomplished leader in the pharmaceutical industry, currently serving as the Head of Project Management. With extensive experience in senior leadership roles that carried full P&L responsibility, he brings a strategic and results-driven approach to organizational growth. His expertise spans across research, process chemistry, scale-up, manufacturing, GMP compliance, CMC/regulatory affairs, techno-commercial strategy, business development, change management, and people leadership. A graduate of Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala, India, Dr. Thomas is known for effectively aligning technical capabilities with business goals to drive innovation an operational excellence.

Prof. S. Sampath

Srinivasan Sampath (born 1961) is an Indian electrochemist, nanotechnologist and a professor of the department of chemistry at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.He is known for his studies on supercapacitors and nano bimetallics.He is an elected fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciencesand the Indian National Science Academy.The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the apex agency of the Government of India for scientific research, awarded him the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology, one of the highest Indian science awards, in 2006, for his contributions to chemical sciences.

Dr. Sushant Hazra

Susant Hazra grew up in a small village of district Howrah, West Bengal. He completed his M.Sc degree in 2015 and Ph.D degree in 2020 under the supervison of Prof. Anil J Elias at Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi). Afterwards, he moved to Prof. Sachin Handa's research group at University of Louisville, Kentuckey, USA for a post-doctoral research associate. In June 2022, Susanta joined the Department of Inorganic and Physical Chemistry, Indian Institute of Science as an Assistant Professor. His main research interests are focused on green and sustaianable catalysis, inparticular exploring the micellar catalysis, bio-micellar catalysis, development of chiral micelles and catalysts for useful organic transformations.

Dr. PriyaKumari C P

Dr. Priyakumari C.P. is currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical Sciences at IISER Mohali. Her research interests span across theoretical and computational chemistry, with a focus on understanding complex chemical bonding and reactivity in molecular and extended systems. Prior to joining IISER Mohali, Dr. Priyakumari held prestigious Inspire Faculty Fellowships at two of India's premier institutions. From 2021 to July 2023, she was associated with the Department of Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Palakkad, Kerala. Earlier, she served in the Solid State and Structural Chemistry Unit at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, from 2019 to 2020.She undertook postdoctoral research from 2016 to 2018 in the renowned group of Nobel Laureate Prof. Roald Hoffmann at Cornell University, Ithaca, USA. Her doctoral research was completed in 2016 under the guidance of Prof. E. D. Jemmis at IISER Trivandrum, marking a strong foundation in advanced theoretical chemistry. She earned her Master's degree in Chemistry from Calicut University, Kerala, in 2009.

Mr. Somnath Das

Mr. Somnath Das is aSenior Research Scientist at Unilever India, bringing over 15 years of diverse experience in Research & Development, Materials Chemistry, and People Management. A strategic innovator and domain expert, Mr. Das plays a pivotal role in the Global R&D – Beauty and Wellbeing & Personal Care S&T Team, contributing to the design and development of high-impact, functional materials for consumer products.Mr. Das is also deeply committed to Occupational Safety and Health. As a certified safety professional (IOSH, National Safety Council, DuPont), he has served as Site Safety Coordinator and has successfully trained over 1000 employees across Unilever India in workplace safety, chemical handling, and behavioral safety practices.His academic background includes a Professional Certification in Data Science from IIM Kozhikode, an Executive MBA in Marketing and Leadership Strategy from NarseeMonjee Institute of Management Studies, and a Master's in Chemistry from the University of Calcutta.With a unique blend of scientific expertise, data fluency, and leadership acumen, Mr. Somnath Das continues to drive innovation in consumer products while promoting a culture of safety, compliance, and continuous learning.

Dr. Suresh C H

Dr. Suresh C H is the director, SRIBS, KSCSTE, Kerala. Dr. Suresh C. H. completed his M.Sc. in Chemistry at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, in 1992. He pursued his Ph.D. in computational chemistry under the guidance of Prof. Shridhar R. Gadre at the University of Pune, earning his degree in 1999. As part of his doctoral research, he worked at Nagoya University, Japan, supported by a Monbusho scholarship. In 2000, he was awarded the prestigious JSPS post-doctoral fellowship to collaborate with Prof. Nobuaki Koga. Between 2002 and 2004, he held a post-doctoral position at Nagoya University funded by the Venture Business Laboratory. Later, he joined Prof. Mu-Hyun Baik's group as a post-doctoral researcher at Indiana University Bloomington, USA, during 2004–2005. Dr. Suresh began his career at CSIR-NIIST in 2005 as a scientist and progressed through the ranks, becoming a senior scientist in 2008, a principal scientist in 2011, a senior principal scientist in 2016, and a chief scientist in 2021. In 2008, he received the Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship to collaborate with Prof. Gernot Frenking at Marburg University, Germany. His contributions to the field have been recognized with the CRSI Bronze Medal, and he was elected as a Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore, in 2022. His research focuses on topology analysis of molecular electrostatic potential and its applications. With extensive expertise in electronic structure theory, homogeneous catalysis, and reaction mechanisms involving organic, organometallic, and inorganic systems, Dr. Suresh has published over 220 research

papers in esteemed peer-reviewed journals, making significant contributions to the field of computational and theoretical chemistry.

Dr. Jatish Kumar

Jatish Kumar is currently an Assistant Professor at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Tirupati, India. He obtained his Ph.D. in Chemistry from CSIR-NIIST, India, in 2012 under the supervision of Prof. K. George Thomas, and subsequently worked as a JSPS postdoctoral fellow in Prof. Tsuyoshi Kawai´s group at NAIST, Nara, Japan. In 2016, he moved as a Marie Curie postdoctoral researcher to Prof. Luis M. Liz-Marzán´s group at CIC biomaGUNE in San Sebastian, Spain. His research interests include the synthesis and assembly of chiral plasmonic, organic, and inorganic nanomaterials for biodetection. Jatish does research in Nanotechnology, Supramolecular Chemistry, and Photochemistry.

Sreejith Chengazhassery

Sreejith Chengazhassery is a Human Resources professional based in Thrissur, Kerala, India, currently working with Elite Foods Pvt. Ltd. He holds a Diploma in Human Resources Practice from Bradfield Institute (2012–2013), a Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (2000–2001), and a Master’s degree in English Language and Literature from Mahatma Gandhi University (1998–2000). With a strong foundation in HR practices and communication, Sreejith brings valuable expertise in performance management, employee relations, public speaking, and team leadership. His ability to manage talent and foster effective workplace communication makes him a key contributor to organizational growth and culture.