seeking information and advice has increased many fold. Obviously, there is an urgent need to organise an information and service centre covering all aspects of Indian medicinal plants into a database.

II. NAPRALERT

The Natural Product Alert, NAPRALERT, being maintained at the College of Pharmacy, University of Illinois, Chicago, is a database of world literature on the chemical constituents and pharmacology of plant, microbial and animal extracts. This database refers to 75,000 publications, 50,000 of which are from the post-1975 period. The database is organised in three profiles: ethnomedical, pharmacological and phytochemical. The ethnomedical profile gives the scientific and common names of the organism, folkloric and traditional uses and literature citation. The pharmacological profile gives the names, parts of the organism used, country of origin, types of extracts and pharmacological tests, mode of administration, test species, their sex, dosage levels, qualitative results and literature. The phytochemical profile deals with the name of the chemical constituent, major chemical group, part of the organism, percentage of yield, country of origin and literature. Information on biosynthesis, plant tissue culture, means of identification, agronomic studies, antitumour activity, microbial transformation and review