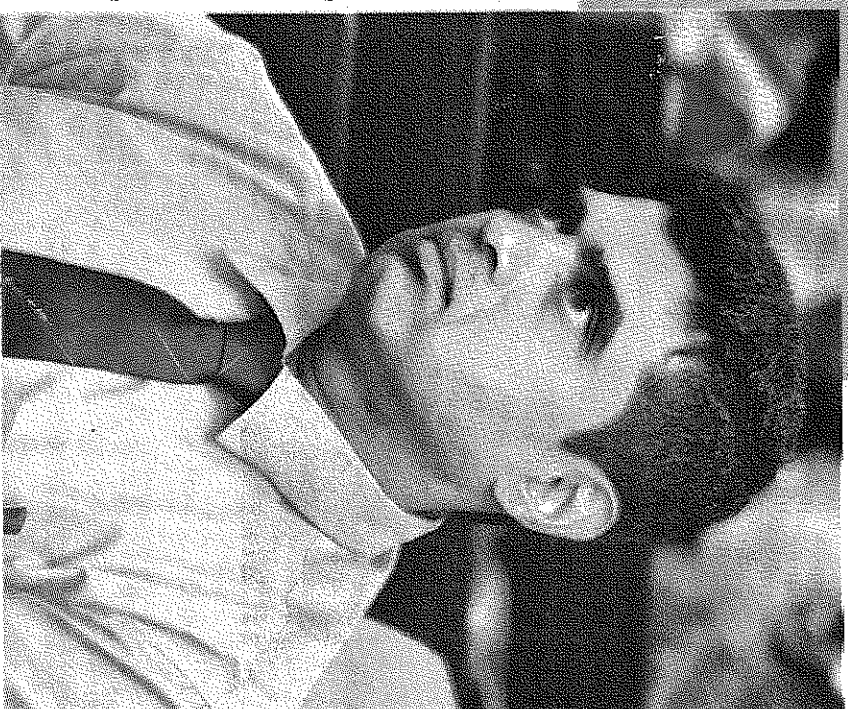


We have heard the saying 'everyone is skilled at something'. But some people in this world not only display one talent but an array of different skills. By reading the life story of such a person, we can get many examples of how to make our lives successful and accomplished. It is extremely rare and difficult to be a person who has made a special contribution to the development of science during his or her youth since focusing on scientific research in a developing country like Sri Lanka is very difficult. This is about a wonderful Sri Lankan young man who has overcome such challenges to achieve his goal.

L.D.B. Suriyagodawas born in 1975 and he was able to enter the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Peradeniya in 2013. He obtained an opportunity to study crop science and then focused on crop cultivation to give farmers high crop yields. He studied with a lot of dedication and enthusiasm, and became the best student in his batch. His successful completion of his first degree brought him scholarships from various countries. But as his desire was to teach the knowledge he had learned, he began his career as a biochemist at the Department of Crop Science in the Department of Agriculture in 2004.

He continued his research work and Suriyagoda won the Monbukagakusho Scholarship Degree to Saga University in Japan and further research was initiated on food crops. He was interested in activities such as the examination and comparison of various crops species, expanding his activities, and he was interested in biofuels. Hence he started to study the science of Biostatistics, at the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture of the University of Peradeniya. He prepared to take the biggest challenge in his life, using the knowledge, talents and experience he had acquired. That is, to study a doctorate. He started his PhD in 2008 and studied the provision

of water and phosphorus in a restricted environment using model simulations at the University of Western Australia. In his post-graduate studies, he was involved in research on the growing importance of plant growth, combining the qualitative and qualitative knowledge gained with the growth. Suriyagoda who successfully completed his Ph.D. in 2011 returned to his home, the Crop science faculty of the University of Peradeniya. His research degree was the first Doctorate of Philosophy in Sri Lanka on the crop simulation model. Although these crop simulation models have been used to study the growth of plants in other developed countries several decades ago, it was a new base of knowledge for Sri Lanka. Dr. Suriyagoda, who was instrumental in distributing this knowledge to within



A Young Scientist to Enlighten Agriculture

the Sri Lankan student community and worked hard to include crop simulation models and its practical applications in graduate and post graduate syllabuses.

Dr. Suriyagoda who initiated new research in crop varieties after the Ph.D., began to analyze the effect of various nutrients on crop growth. Currently, farmers use agrochemicals for crop cultivation and additional fertilizers are washed away into natural ecosystems. In some areas, agricultural crops are also cultivated without sufficient nutrition. In some other areas, agricultural crops lack sufficient nutrition. Farmers have failed to reap maximum crop yields when using such unsuitable agricultural practices.

Therefore, it was an essential part of the comprehensive study of the nutrient content of the plant, to know how the manner in which soil loses nutrients, the manner in which plants absorb nutrients, the way in which nutrients are spread in a plant and the amount of nutrients which remain in a plant once it is harvested. Thus the young scientist, who took up the challenge, started researching the paddy plant. Dr. Suriyagoda was instrumental in the research and development work and acquired the support from various government departments for his work. He was able to obtain local and foreign financial assistance with the cooperation of the Batalagoda, Rice Research Institute and the Department of Agriculture.

As a result of such advanced level research, he was able to open up to international level of science by presenting it in the international scientific research journals. The Department of Agriculture distributed some of the latest scientific knowledge among farmers and agricultural officials at the village level. Dr. Suriyagoda's research showed how paddy cultivation could be made successful using reduced amounts of phosphorous. Dr. Suriyagoda, who works on such high-quality research won the Presidential award for

his scientific researches. In the 2011, the Young Scientist of the Year Award at the Sustainable Phosphorus Summit was presented to him and in 2015 he was awarded the Alexander von Humboldt scholarship. Dr. Suriyagoda is dedicated to distributing his knowledge and experiences to younger students in the country. He is currently a member of the Research Supervision Panels at the University of Peradeniya and is involved in the research of undergraduate and postgraduate students studying the Bachelor of Science degree. He also serves as a research assistant at the School of Biology at the University of Western Australia.

In order to appreciate the excellent service rendered by Dr. L.D.B. Suriyagoda for the advancement of both local and international science as well as the use of scientific knowledge, he was presented with the award of Young Scientist of the Year, by the National Science and Technology Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research and the Annual Research Symposium of the National Youth Academy.

Pradeep Piyathilake,
Active Committee Member,
Young Scientists Forum.

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