

Citation index: points to ponder

Gangan Prathap¹ has mentioned about the research performance of Indian IITs in terms of citations per paper. It is a paradox that IITs have recorded the lowest citation value per paper (3.57) in spite of almost double the number of research publications compared to the University of Wisconsin, USA, which shows a higher citation value (6.55) irrespective of the lesser number of papers. When we ponder upon the specific attributes of the Indian scientific community, it is apparent that the low citation index of Indian papers is not due to their inferior quality of publications, but

is a manifestation of the typical attitude of Indian scientists, who rarely want to cite the references of their colleagues or fellow researchers in other institutions, in an attempt to prove that they are the pioneers in the respective areas of research. This is evident from the reference list of most of the papers published by Indian scientists, where due care is taken to avoid the reference to other Indian workers. In order to overcome this tendency, it is necessary that Indian scientists cite the references of their fellow researchers more frequently. This will create a win-win situation for both, the

Indian scientists as well as Indian institutions like the IITs.

1. Prathap, G., *Curr. Sci.*, 2011, **101**, 136.

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Save Ganga campaign and hydroelectric projects in Uttarakhand

Currently, a hydroelectric dam (Figure 1) on the Alaknanda River at Srinagar Garhwal, Uttarakhand has stirred fresh controversies on 'development at what cost?' This hydroelectric project was cleared for the production of 200 MW of power in 1985, however, at present the same is planned to increase up to 330 MW. For this, the height of the dam needs to be increased from 77 m to 99 m. Increasing the dam height will submerge the temple of a local deity – the Dhari Devi temple. With sentiments of the local people attached to the temple, it is proposed to relocate the same. However,



Figure 1. Hydroelectric project on Alaknanda River at Srinagar Garhwal.

many religious leaders and local people do not agree with this proposal, resulting in severe conflicts and ultimately stopping the construction work frequently.

Uttarakhand being a 'Devbhumi' – land of the Gods, there are many temples along the river basins, hilltops and villages. Thus the planners need to assess the effects and loss prior to the execution of any construction activity, in case any religious site is present in the proposed project area. The relocation issue of Dhari Devi temple has given a momentum to analyse the impacts of dam construction in a much larger perspective. There are voices raised in the community demanding to constitute a board comprising locals, religious leaders and environmentalists in order to analyse all projects on the Ganga in Uttarakhand.

The plans of the State Government to build over 300 small and large dams, of which 53 are exclusively on the rivers Alaknanda and Bhagirathi – the major tributaries of the Ganga, need to be revisited in view of the controversy on the relocation of the Dhari Devi temple along with the 'save Ganga' campaign. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is of the view that the proposed

plan of the State Government will lead to the drying up of large stretches of the Alaknanda and Bhagirathi riverbeds. In case the plan is executed, it will not only substantially wipeout aquatic life and biodiversity, but also the villages along the river basin. Besides, the ongoing hydroelectric projects in Uttarakhand have raised many issues related to the Himalayan ecosystem and environment.

The mission of the National Ganga River Basin Authority, which aims to keep the Ganga clean and free from pollution by 2020, may only be achieved once sufficient water flow is maintained in its major tributaries. Otherwise, the continuous pouring of filth in the river basin will lead to disaster. If the current pace and planning of development continue, the mission to clean up the Ganga would remain only a dream.

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