

and was known to have passed strictures against even governmental agencies, when it came to the question of environmental protection. Thus he commanded respect even from antagonists of nuclear power. He also had the unique knack of expressing his views in a pleasant manner without hurting anybody. As the chairman of Bhatsai River Pollution Committee, appointed by the Maharashtra Government, he castigated the government for lack of policy for locating industries causing extensive water pollution in the area. That turned out to be his last assignment of a remarkable professional career spanning three decades.

There was something rare in the personality of Ganguly that enthused people

around him to start thinking; every conversation, be it official, personal or social was interspersed with this spirit.

It is hoped that this narration of a tribute to Ganguly will enlighten all the current stakeholders in the nuclear field, recalling the challenging past in the evolution of our atomic energy programme and sow the seed for productive pursuits in the future.

Ganguly was elected as INSA Fellow in 1979. Dr Jagadhish Shankar who on directions from Bhabha selected Ganguly to lead the radiation protection programme in 1955, had written an INSA Memoir on Ganguly. He was selected as National Environmental Fellow by the Department of Science & Technology,

Govt of India in 1979 for two years. He carried out extensive research on the Western Ghats on the transport of rocky material by rivers and on forestry cover. He was honoured with the award of Padmashri in 1974 for his contributions to environmental sciences and radiation protection.

Indian Association for Radiation Protection has published a Compendium of Memoirs of Ganguly authored by Dr M. R. Iyer, at its golden jubilee conference in 2018.

V. S. RAMAMURTHY

*National Institute of Advanced Studies,  
Bengaluru 560 012, India  
e-mail: vsramamurthy@gmail.com*

## Requirement of student-centric presentations in NIRF

The popularity of National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) is increasing year after year. Ranking stimulates competition among institutions and helps improve quality or performance. Ultimately ranking of institutions will result in economic and social progress. It is time now to make NIRF results more user-friendly. Though NIRF simply states that it gives a 'scorecard' to stakeholders, it serves many purposes as follows: (1) Students can make informed decisions in selecting or short-listing institutions based on their ranks. (2) Government agencies prefer to provide autonomy and research grants based on ranks. (3) Companies prefer to recruit workforce from well-ranked institutions, and hence campus and other placements will be better for such institutions. (4) Faculty members prefer to work in well-ranked institutions. (5) Institutions, being aware of their strengths and weaknesses, plan for improvements.

Aspiring students have started using NIRF ranks in the selection or short-listing of higher education institutions. Students compare institutions in aspects such as rate of graduation, employment records of graduates, and qualifications of teaching staff as a proxy of teaching quality. NIRF uses five parameters or criteria and consolidates the score to rank the institutions. It provides criteria-wise scores for each institution, but institutional comparisons are to be checked

manually. If the institutions can be sorted based on criteria-wise performance, say ranks based on 'teaching, learning and resources' alone, this will be useful to students. Also, the needs of students vary and weights given by NIRF for the criteria may not be suitable to all. A student may like to find an institution to complete his/her undergraduate programme and start earning immediately (may be necessary for family economic conditions). For this student, the 'research and professional practices' may be less important, but 'teaching, learning and resources' and placement details in the form of 'graduate outcomes' are more important. Another student may like to find an institution for research-intensive postgraduate programme, and thus the 'research and professional practices' is important. For this student, 'graduate outcomes' and 'teaching, learning and resources' may not be useful. NIRF can facilitate these students by providing a sorting facility of the institutions based on specific criteria. Ranking based on the combined mono-dimensional score alone is less useful in many cases<sup>1</sup>. At present, NIRF allows sorting of the institutions by state, and this seems useful to many students who prefer to study in their own or neighbouring states. This facility can be extended to criteria-wise sorting as well. The QS and THE Rankings websites reveal that these rankings focus on helping the aspiring students to select

institutions. Discipline-wise ordering of institutions in 48 independent disciplines is facilitated by the QS Rankings 2019. It also provides ranks based on graduate employability. The Center for World University Rankings, ranks institutions in 227 subject categories<sup>2</sup>. These types of criteria-wise and subject-wise sorting are more useful to aspiring students. The tentative tuition-fee structure will also be helpful to students as many of them cannot afford high tuition fee. Initiatives along these lines are required from NIRF to take it to the next level. Online vendors of electronic items provide facilities to compare features of different products. Similar options to compare institutions (the feature here is criteria score) may also be useful.

1. Prathap, G., *Curr. Sci.*, 2017, **113**(4), 550–553.
2. Prathap, G., *Curr. Sci.*, 2018, **114**(6), 1151–1153.

T. R. NEELAKANTAN

*Department of Civil Engineering,  
School of Environmental and  
Construction Technology,  
Kalasalingam Academy of Research and  
Education,  
Krishnankoil 626 126, India  
e-mail: neelakantan@klu.ac.in*